

THE CAMPAIGN FOR A NATIONAL
PARK IN WESTERN
NORTH CAROLINA,
1885-1940

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the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Western Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in American History

by
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

JESSE RAYMOND LANKFORD, JR., M. A., June 3, 1973. American History
THE CAMPAIGN FOR A NATIONAL PARK IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, 1885-1940

The movement to establish a national park in the majestic Southern Appalachian Mountains was a crusade that lasted over forty years. It eventually reached fruition in 1940 with the formal dedication of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the states of North Carolina and Tennessee.

The establishment of a national park in the mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee was brought about by years of sacrifice and labor by numerous individuals and organizations on the regional and national scene. It is the purpose of this thesis to examine western North Carolina's role in the park movement that culminated with the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. An exhaustive or elaborate history of the entire campaign for a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains is not within the scope of this paper.

By concentrating on the high and low points of the park movement in western North Carolina from 1885 to 1940, the author hopes to illuminate the major obstacles that frustrated an early realization of a national park in the region. The thesis also focuses on individuals and organizations of western North Carolina whose contributions to the

park movement have been largely ignored by previous works concerned with the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Approved Mat R. Williams
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The first organized campaign for the establishment of a national park in the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina can be traced to the formation of the Appalachian National Park Association in the fall of 1899. Prior to the creation of the Appalachian National Park Association only sporadic interest had been demonstrated in the preservation of the Appalachian forests. Dr. Chase F. Smith, the leading spirit of the Appalachian National Park Association, maintained that Dr. Henry O. Henshaw of Boston was probably the first person to advocate some form of a national preserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. On October 23, 1891, Dr. Henshaw read a paper before an assembly of the American Academy of Medicine in New York City. His subject was the climatic treatment of disease, but Dr. Henshaw concluded his paper with the suggestion that a national park should be established in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. To Dr. Henshaw the idea of a park in the Southern Appalachians was the best way to save the valuable elements of the region available to the most people. He indicated that the Southern Appalachians were destined of its reputation.

Henry O. Henshaw, M. D., The Climatic Treatment of Disease: Vegetate North Carolina as a Health Resort, Chicago: Office of the American Medical Association, 1899, pp. 1-24.

CHAPTER I

EARLY EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A PRESERVE IN THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS, 1885-1905

The first organized campaign for the establishment of a national park in the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina can be traced to the formation of the Appalachian National Park Association in the fall of 1899. Prior to the creation of the Appalachian National Park Association only sporadic interest had been demonstrated in the preservation of the Appalachian forests. Dr. Chase P. Ambler, the leading spirit of the Appalachian National Park Association, maintained that Dr. Henry O. Marcy of Boston was probably the first person to advocate some form of a national preserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. On October 29, 1885, Dr. Marcy read a paper before an assembly of the American Academy of Medicine in New York City. His subject was the climatic treatment of disease, but Dr. Marcy concluded his paper with the suggestion that a national park should be established in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.¹ To Dr. Marcy the idea of a park in the Southern Appalachians was the best way to make the salubrious climate of the region available to the most people. He undoubtedly chose the Southern Appalachian area because of its superior climate

¹ Henry O. Marcy, M. D., The Climatic Treatment of Disease: Western North Carolina as a Health Resort (Chicago: Office of the American Medical Association, 1886), pp. 1-24.

marked by mild winters and cool, refreshing summers. Of course Dr. Marcy was more interested in the preservation of human life than the preservation of virgin forests for future generations of Americans. He called for the establishment of a park simply to facilitate the climatic treatment of certain physical ailments. However, Dr. Marcy probably should be credited with the earliest written suggestion of a national park in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

In contrast to Dr. Marcy's interest in the creation of a health resort in the Southern Appalachians, Dr. Chase P. Ambler desired a national preserve to protect the beauty and natural resources of the region. Dr. Ambler came to North Carolina from Ohio in 1899. He settled in Asheville as a practicing physician.² Ambler began to explore the superb forests of the area and soon began to formulate plans for some means of maintaining the rugged splendor of the Southern Appalachian region. The most obvious scheme to preserve the forests would be the establishment of a park. Dr. Ambler's plan for a park received a boost in June, 1899, when he invited Judge William R. Day to a fishing trip in the Sapphire region of western North Carolina.³ Judge Day was an old friend from Ohio and had recently returned from the Paris peace negotiations

²Asheville Citizen-Times, October 5, 1930, sec. B, p. 2.

³Charles D. Smith, "The Appalachian National Park Movement, 1885-1901," The North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVII (January, 1960), 41, hereinafter cited as Smith, "Appalachian National Park."

that concluded the Spanish-American War.⁴ The judge's brief respite in the mountains of western North Carolina, coupled with Dr. Ambler's accolades to the region, sold him on the desirability of pursuing Dr. Ambler's idea of a park. Judge Day believed that if the plan for a park were properly handled, the United States Congress could be spurred into taking some action on the matter. A brief outline for a park campaign was prepared. The first stage of the campaign would be to bring the matter before the people of the Southern Appalachian region. Next, state senators would be interviewed and their support openly solicited. After the first two phases of the campaign had been carried out, a mass meeting would be held and all interested parties would be invited. It was hoped that representatives from states other than North Carolina would attend the meeting. The delegates to the meeting or conference would pass resolutions and set up a formal organization to conduct the park campaign. The main purpose of the conference would be to get Congress to appoint a committee to investigate the feasibility of establishing a forest reserve and a national park in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.⁵

Dr. Ambler did not delay in putting the park campaign plans into action. With the assistance of George H. Smathers of Asheville, work on park publicity began. Articles soon appeared in the local

⁴ Asheville Citizen-Times, October 5, 1930, sec. B, p. 2.

⁵ Asheville Daily Citizen, November 21, 1899, p. 1.

papers and handbills were circulated enlisting support for the proposed park.⁶ In September, 1899, the park plan was brought before the Asheville Board of Trade.⁷ The Board of Trade was receptive to the idea and on October 7 announced that it had adopted a petition calling for the establishment of a Southern National Park.⁸ The Board of Trade was not the only organization to come to the aid of the park campaign. The major newspaper of western North Carolina, the Asheville Daily Citizen, flatly stated that it backed all efforts to secure a national park. The Daily Citizen observed that a national park could not be secured in the span of one day, but the fight for the park should begin without any delay. While the Board of Trade discreetly supported a "Southern National Park," the Daily Citizen made no attempt to hide its chauvinism and proclaimed that if a national park were to be located anywhere in the East it should be situated in the Southern Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina.⁹

Of course the Daily Citizen was quick to justify western North Carolina's claim for a national park. According to the Daily Citizen, men traveled to Yellowstone National Park to see the sights, but people came to western North Carolina to see the sights

⁶Smith, "Appalachian National Park," p. 41.

⁷Asheville Daily Citizen, November 21, 1899, p. 1.

⁸Ibid., October 7, 1899, p. 1.

⁹Ibid., September 29, 1899, p. 2.

and to restore their health.¹⁰ If the great forests located in the region were to be preserved, it had to be done immediately because of encroachments by lumber interests:

Already the timber cutter is at work and the heaviest trunks of trees are being felled and hauled to the railroad, carried to Norfolk and Wilmington, and shipped to Germany. Men are buying up walnut trees at \$100 as they stand in the forest. Every squatter who has a clump of trees has an offer from a timber cutter for his grove, while sawmills are working on every stream. The woods are alive with shrewd lumber dealers and the axman is eating his way into the heart of the spruce and oak lands. The roads are blocked with lumber wagons and six-horse teams are hauling splendid trunks of poplar to market. With shortsighted policy landowners are letting their best timber go. By and by the mountains will be stripped of their choicest growth and the heights will be bare and rugged.¹¹

The Daily Citizen proposed that 150,000 acres of forest land be saved from destruction by lumbermen through the establishment of a national park. It was thought that the acreage could be secured at a cost of two to three dollars per acre. Besides preserving the forest from impending destruction, the healthful climate of a Southern Appalachian park would furnish the ideal location for sanitariums. It should be observed how closely the Daily Citizen's suggestion of the region as the perfect location for sanitariums parallels Dr. Henry O. Marcy's recommendation made fourteen years earlier.¹²

¹⁰ Ibid., October 4, 1899, p. 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

While the local press was initiating its campaign for the park, Dr. Ambler persuaded A. H. McQuilkin, editor of Southern Pictures and Pencillings, to devote an issue of his magazine to the advertisement of the park movement. Approximately five hundred copies of the Southern Pictures and Pencillings were sent to prominent people residing in the South. Petitions and circulars were prepared and mailed to the governors, senators, and congressmen of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Superintendents of Southern schools were furnished with park petitions to circulate within their local school districts. By the middle of November, 1899, over twelve thousand letters, petition blanks, and circulars had been distributed throughout the Southeast.¹³

On October 9, 1899, the Asheville Board of Trade created a special committee on parks and forestry to handle the park question. A. H. McQuilkin served as chairman of the committee and Dr. Chase P. Ambler was secretary.¹⁴ With the fulfillment of the preliminary step of bringing the idea of a national park before the public and elected officials of the region, the committee on parks and forestry decided to call a conference to create an organization to direct the park campaign. On November 11, it was announced that all interested people in North Carolina and bordering states were

¹³Asheville Daily Citizen, November 21, 1899, p. 1.

¹⁴Smith, "Appalachian National Park," p. 43.

invited to a convention to be held in Asheville on November 22, 1899. The main purpose of the convention would be the establishment of an association to promote the scheme of a national park for the Southern Appalachian region.¹⁵

The park conference was held as scheduled in the grand ballroom of the Battery Park Hotel. The opening session began at 3:30 p.m. and was well attended by representatives from states throughout the South. N. G. Gonzales of Columbia, South Carolina, was elected temporary chairman of the convention by acclamation, and the ubiquitous Dr. Ambler was chosen temporary secretary of the convention. Chairman Gonzales wasted little time in introducing Locke Craig of North Carolina, who presented the objectives of the conference to the assembled representatives. In his address Locke Craig pointed out that it had been the policy of the federal government to establish national parks in various sections of the country. It was remarkable that the mountain region of the Southern states had so far been overlooked. In Craig's opinion the Southern Appalachian region provided the perfect location for a park.¹⁶ Locke Craig insisted that:

This magnificent productive country was made to produce the highest types of enlightened men and women. It was designed for peaceful, prosperous homesteads, for fields of golden grain and the happy sons of reapers. Man was not made for the forests, but the forests were made for men. While this is true it would be reckless

¹⁵ Asheville Daily Citizen, November 11, 1899, p. 2.

¹⁶ Asheville Daily Citizen, November 23, 1899, p. 1.

stupidity, negligence of the grossest kind, if portion of this grand and picturesque region be not preserved in its original, natural condition for the enjoyment and welfare of the people. There is only one feasible way to accomplish this and that is by government ownership. These large areas can now be purchased at nominal sums. The timber alone, even at present prices, is worth more than the price asked for the fee simple title. . . . The forests will be destroyed unless something be done for their protection. The owners of these lands may appreciate their natural beauty and the irreparable loss from a sentimental standpoint, but we cannot expect the individual in this age of money making to sacrifice to sentimental considerations his material welfare and opportunity to better his condition. The government must preserve this invaluable gift of nature for the benefit of the people and now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. . . .¹⁷

Locke Craig ended his speech by slipping into a tirade against the injustices perpetuated upon the South which paid "more than her pro rata part of the revenues" to the federal government.¹⁸

After Locke Craig finished his address, a committee on resolutions was chosen by acclamation. It consisted of Josephus Daniels, A. H. McQuilkin, J. J. Seay, Moses H. Cone, and Pleasant A. Stovall. Several other committees were chosen also. Among these were the committee on by-laws and the committee on permanent organization. All committees were asked to present their reports at the evening session of the convention.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The selection of committees was followed by several more speeches on behalf of a Southern park. All the speakers maintained that western North Carolina would be the best location for any proposed park. One of the more cogent speeches of the afternoon session was delivered by United States Senator Marion Butler of North Carolina. Senator Butler, as Locke Craig had pointed out earlier, maintained that the federal government was already in the park business. He noted that Yellowstone National Park, established in 1872 in the states of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, was almost the size of the state of Connecticut. A large sum of money was expended on Yellowstone which was situated a great distance from the national center of population. According to Senator Butler, for one-fourth of the money expended on Yellowstone National Park, a national park could be established in the Southern Appalachians of North Carolina. A national park in western North Carolina would have the advantage of being within traveling distance of the large centers of population. Senator Butler maintained that no man returned to Yellowstone National Park for a second visit. In sharp contrast he believed that visitors to a national park in the Southern Appalachian region would return many times. Visitors could not get acquainted with the Rocky Mountain area. The Rockies seemed cold and forbidding, but visitors to the mountains of western North Carolina would be charmed by the warm beauty of the area and most visitors would long to return. If the federal government was correct in creating national parks in the Far West, then it was only logical

that at least one national park should be established in the East. The best location for any eastern park had to be the mountains of western North Carolina. Senator Butler observed quite wisely that a Southern national park should not be asked for by the park advocates. Instead they should ask for a national park in the truest sense of the word.²⁰

Near the end of the afternoon session of the park conference, telegrams were read to the delegates. Among the more notable telegrams were the ones from Senator Jeter C. Pritchard of North Carolina, and Joseph A. Holmes, the state geologist for North Carolina. Both Senator Pritchard and Geologist Holmes apologized for being unable to attend the Asheville convention and pledged their full support for future efforts to secure a park.²¹ Senator Pritchard would be of great assistance to park advocates in their labors to secure a congressional authorization for the proposed park. He was a native of the Asheville area and as a Republican senator he had influence within the predominant party in Congress. It was expected that Senator Pritchard would assume command of the park drive to secure favorable federal legislation.²² Unboudtedly, Senator Pritchard's telegram expressing his willingness to assist the park advocates was received with delight by the convention delegates.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Asheville Daily Citizen, September 29, 1899, p. 2.

The evening session of the park convention proved to be the most crucial phase of the meeting. In contrast to the carnival atmosphere of the afternoon session, marked by speeches and welcomes to the delegates, the evening session was devoted to the task of drawing up the formal organization to administer the park campaign. The various committees selected during the afternoon session presented their recommendations to the convention. The committee on by-laws recommended that the organization should be known as the "Appalachian National Park Association." It was suggested that the organization should have twenty-five vice-presidents to complement the officers already chosen. The second Tuesday of September was the day recommended for the annual meeting. Josephus Daniels of North Carolina reported that the committee on resolutions made the recommendation that the national park should be located in the mountains of western North Carolina. Daniels noted that the committee on resolutions had one North Carolinian, one Georgian, one New Yorker, and one member from Illinois serving on it. The North Carolina member was the only one who favored no recommendation of western North Carolina as the best location for the proposed park.²³

It was moved by Charles A. Webb of Asheville that the park organization be named the "Appalachian National Park Association" as recommended by the committee on by-laws. However, another

²³Ibid., November 23, 1899, p. 1.

delegate moved that the organization be called the "Southern National Park Association." These two conflicting motions marked the high water point of the convention. Up to the evening session there had been very little discussion among the convention delegates. Things had moved along quite smoothly, but now the convention floor erupted in debate. Dr. Chase P. Ambler pointed out that the matter had been covered in committee. The North had four parks while the South had none. The committee on by-laws had decided against calling for a national park in the East because that would result in competition from other mountain areas against the Southern Appalachian region.²⁴

After Dr. Ambler finished speaking, Dr. Thomas Lawrence addressed the delegates. He maintained that it would be a serious mistake to call the proposed park "Southern." As Senator Butler had noted in the afternoon session, Dr. Lawrence believed that the park advocates should work for a national park and avoid the error of making the proposed park a sectional issue. He was convinced that the association should preserve the name "Appalachian." Dr. Lawrence's remarks were followed by keen debate on the desirability of the name "Appalachian" as opposed to "Southern."²⁵

When the advantages and disadvantages of each name had been thoroughly discussed, it was moved that a vote be taken on the name

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

"The Southern National Park Association." The first vote ended in a deadlock and on the second ballot the motion was defeated. With the defeat of the name "Southern" the recommendation of the committee on by-laws was passed and the official name of the organization became the "Appalachian National Park Association."²⁶

Another important step was taken when the conference accepted the recommendation of the committee on resolutions. The newly formed Appalachian National Park Association would work to locate the national park in the mountains of western North Carolina. The committee on resolution's recommendation of western North Carolina as the site for the proposed park was adopted unanimously after lengthy debate. The evening session ended with the election of George S. Powell as president and Dr. Ambler as secretary and treasurer of the newly formed Appalachian National Park Association. Members' dues were set at \$2.00 and the organization would seek formal incorporation from the state of North Carolina.²⁷

The officers of the Appalachian National Park Association wasted no time in carrying out the principal objectives of the new organization. The association was duly incorporated by the state of

²⁶ Asheville Daily Citizen, November 23, 1899, p. 2.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

North Carolina on December 19, 1899.²⁸ It was decided that the association needed an official voice to publicize its activities and the park movement. The association's committee on publicity and promotions made arrangements with A. H. McQuilkin to devote his magazine Southern Pictures and Pencillings to the park drive. A contract was signed calling for 9,000 copies of McQuilkin's weekly magazine to be distributed over a span of two months.²⁹ The legal incorporation of the Appalachian National Park Association and the procurement of a vehicle for park publicity cleared the way for concentration upon the chief goal of the park proponents.

When the Appalachian National Park Association was organized, the main purpose of the association was to bring the park question before Congress. The association decided that the best possible way to acquire favorable legislative action was the preparation of a memorial to be presented to the Congress. The task of preparing the memorial was assigned to Charles McNamee, an Asheville lawyer and cousin of millionaire George W. Vanderbilt.³⁰

The memorial to Congress drafted by Charles McNamee was officially adopted by the Appalachian National Park Association on

²⁸ Incorporation Papers of the Appalachian National Park Association, Appalachian National Park Association Collection, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

²⁹ Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1905, 39, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

³⁰ Asheville Citizen-Times, October 19, 1930, sec. B, p. 3.

December 19, 1899.³¹ McNamee's memorial was presented to the Congress on January 2, 1900, and was accompanied by a petition introduced by Senator Pritchard. The memorial contained every argument that had ever been presented on behalf of a Southern Appalachian national park.³² It pointed out that in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee the highest mountains of the East were found. The region was the culmination of the Appalachian range and if other national parks were chosen for unusual beauty then the center of the Great Smoky Mountains, the Craggy Mountains, the Black Mountains, and the Balsam Mountains were only awaiting "official recognition" as a national park.³³ The McNamee memorial presented nine basic reasons for the establishment of a national park in the region. Of course many of these nine reasons had been promulgated earlier in park literature and speeches. In summary, the memorial urged the Congress to locate a national park in the Southern Appalachian Mountains because of the natural beauty of the area; the richness and variety of forests in the Southern Appalachians were superb; numerous rivers had their headwaters in these mountains; the climate of the region was healthful with malaria

³¹ Memorial to the Congress of the United States from the Appalachian National Park Association, Adopted December 19, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

³² Sunday Citizen (Asheville), December 13, 1925, p. 18.

³³ Memorial to the Congress of the United States from the Appalachian National Park Association, Adopted December 19, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

unknown; the Southern Appalachians could be visited during all seasons of the year; the area was within twenty-four hours of New York, Chicago, Toledo, St. Louis, and thus was within easy reach of millions of people; the East was entitled to a national park of the stature of Yellowstone National Park in the West; the proposed park would pay in the long run as a forest reserve; and the title to park lands could be easily secured.³⁴

As to the site for the proposed national park, the memorial expressed the Appalachian National Park Association's opinion that the park should be located between parallels 35 and 37 of north latitude, and between lines 82 and 85 of west longitude. This tract of land would lie partly in the state of North Carolina and partly in the state of Tennessee. It would be composed of the Great Smoky, Black, and Balsam mountains. The bulk of the park boundary would fall within western North Carolina. However, the Appalachian National Park Association believed that the matter of the best location for a park could be left to the decision of the chief forester of the federal government.³⁵

The selection of the park's location proved to be a very sensitive issue among park proponents. At the November 22, 1899, meeting held in Asheville to organize the Appalachian National Park Association, the North Carolina representative of the committee on

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

resolutions was the only representative who did not favor the recommendation of western North Carolina as the prime location for the proposed park. Accordingly, the convention delegates passed a resolution recommending western North Carolina as the preferred site for the park. The Appalachian National Park Association's memorial to Congress reflected the wishes of the Asheville convention when it suggested that the heart of the park should be situated in western North Carolina. Soon after the memorial was presented to Congress, the Appalachian National Park Association was racked by dissention over its recommendation of western North Carolina as the prime locale for the national park. Most of the complaints originated from park supporters in states that bordered North Carolina, but some park advocates within North Carolina failed to back the association's proposed park boundary.³⁶

There was room for discontent among park proponents in other Southern states. Asheville was the closest city of the proposed park area. The Appalachian National Park Association had been organized in North Carolina and the leaders of the movement and of the association were North Carolinians. Even the executive office of the association was located in Asheville.³⁷ Park supporters

³⁶ Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1905, 50-51, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

³⁷ "Officers, Appalachian National Park Association," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

outside of North Carolina could not help but think that favoritism entered into the selection of the park site.

In defense of the Appalachian National Park Association, it should be noted that the proposed boundary did contain the highest mountains, the largest area of virgin forests, and the best region of mixed forest growth. Forty-three mountains of six thousand feet and over were found within the Smoky, Black, Craggy, and Balsam mountains. All of these ranges fell within the proposed boundary.³⁸ The association in its memorial did suggest that Congress investigate and survey the Southern Appalachian range and determine the best location for the park. Also the park association maintained that the ultimate selection of the park site could be left up to the chief forester of the United States.³⁹

The administrative officers of the Appalachian National Park Association did not hesitate in attempting to placate the malcontents within the organization. A news release by the association expressed its new position on the park boundary:

There seems to be an impression in certain quarters that the Appalachian National Park Association in their Petition to Congress have asked for the appointment of a Commission to investigate some one certain section of the Great Smoky Mountains. From the time the Park matter was first taken up here in Asheville it has been the policy of those most interested that the question of

³⁸ Memorial to the Congress of the United States from the Appalachian National Park Association, Adopted December 19, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

³⁹ Ibid.

site should not be definitely considered at all until after Congress has appointed a Commission to investigate the whole region. A map has been prepared of the section along the State line between Tennessee and North Carolina and boundaries drawn around this section of country wherein great natural advantages lie, and the establishment of a Park could probably be brought about. The Association has indorsed this site as one of the locations which they would call to the attention of the Commission, if the appointment of such a Commission was secured, but they wish it distinctly understood that this in no way must be construed as giving this point preference over any other.⁴⁰

This statement represented a dramatic change in the Appalachian National Park Association's original position on the park's location. Obviously the association was not completely honest when it maintained that the policy from the beginning had been to consider the whole Appalachian region. In a letter to F. E. Olmstead of the United States Forestry Bureau, Chase P. Ambler admitted that the association did have defined boundaries in mind when it approached Congress on January 2, 1900, with its memorial. Dr. Ambler candidly confessed that ". . . when these boundaries were made public, it aroused so much jealousy and opposition in other sections of the Southern Appalachian Mountains that we abandoned boundaries and maps and simply asked for an investigation of the whole Southern Appalachian region."⁴¹ If Dr. Ambler thought that the park association's efforts were meeting with stiff opposition over the

⁴⁰"Site for the Appalachian National Park," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁴¹Chase P. Ambler to F. E. Olmstead, August 21, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

selection of the location for the park then the attitude of Congress had to be even more distressing.

The Appalachian National Park Association's memorial was referred to the Senate Committee of Agriculture. On April 17, 1900, the association was granted a hearing before this committee. Dr. Ambler was among the park advocates who appeared before the committee and in his words the park memorial was "turned down cold."⁴² The representatives of the park association were told that the federal government could take no action to establish the proposed national park because of the sanctity of states' rights. The Committee of Agriculture maintained that the park supporters had to secure the approval of the states directly involved before any action could be taken by the federal government. The states where the park would be located had to cede to the federal government the right to acquire title to the lands within any park boundary and all park land had to be exempted from taxation. Immediately, the association attempted to comply with the requirements promulgated by the Senate committee. A committee was selected to appear before the legislatures of the states that could possibly be involved in the establishment of a national park in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.⁴³

⁴²Sunday Citizen (Asheville), December 13, 1925, p. 18.

⁴³Ibid.

While the Appalachian National Park Association prepared to take its case to the state legislatures of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Georgia, and Alabama, Senator Jeter C. Pritchard was working for the park in Washington. On April 21, 1900, Senator Pritchard introduced a bill requesting an appropriation of five thousand dollars to provide for a preliminary investigation and survey of the entire Southern Appalachian region. Five days later Senator Pritchard's bill was passed and became law on July 1, 1900.⁴⁴

During the summer of 1900, the Department of Agriculture under Secretary James Wilson directed the preliminary investigation of the Southern Appalachian region from Virginia to Alabama. The actual investigation of the region was carried out by the United States Forestry Bureau with the cooperation of the Geological Survey. A total of approximately 9,600,000 acres was examined and mapped during the investigation. Secretary Wilson, accompanied by Gifford Pinchot, spent ten days personally inspecting and touring the Southern Appalachian region. Both men returned from their trip convinced that the Southern Appalachian Mountains deserved federal protection.⁴⁵ The results of the investigation were presented to Congress in a report issued by Secretary Wilson. The secretary of

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵ Harold T. Pinkett, Gifford Pinchot: Private and Public Forester (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1970), p. 97.

agriculture sent a preliminary report on the investigation to President William McKinley for his inspection. In his letter of January 3, 1901, transmitting the report to President McKinley, Secretary Wilson maintained that the investigation was an extensive one and that the suitability of the region as a national park had been closely examined. Wilson had given thorough attention to all the arguments advanced by the national park proponents and all the arguments advanced by the opponents of the park had been studied. After examining the findings of the investigation, Secretary Wilson believed the Southern Appalachians could best be preserved in the following manner:

The movement for the purchase and control of a large area of forest land in the east by the government has chiefly contemplated a national park. The idea of a national park is conservation, not use; that of a forest reserve, conservation by use. I have therefore to recommend a forest reserve instead of a park. It is fully shown by the investigation that such a reserve would be self-supporting from the sale of timber under wisely directed conservative forestry.⁴⁶

Secretary Wilson's preliminary report was conveyed to Congress by President McKinley along with a letter explaining the chief executive's position on the park issue. According to President McKinley, the facts established by the investigation, coupled with the secretary of agriculture's recommendation of a forest reserve, led him to the conclusion that "favorable consideration" should be given

⁴⁶"Secretary Wilson on National Park: His Letter Presenting a Preliminary Report," January 3, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

by Congress.⁴⁷ Secretary Wilson's recommendation of a forest reserve and President McKinley's message to Congress supporting Wilson's report was viewed as a major step forward by the park proponents.

Although the recommendation of a forest reserve in the Southern Appalachians as opposed to a national park was cause for elation among park supporters, there was room for some concern. From the incipient stages of the park movement, the park advocates had failed to differentiate between the purposes of a national park as opposed to a forest reserve. When the Appalachian National Park Association was formed in November of 1899, influential park proponents had pushed a plan calling for the establishment of a forest reserve and a national park.⁴⁸ The advantage of a forest reserve would be the continued harvesting of the forest resources under the auspices of the federal government. Through the use of scientific forestry the Southern Appalachian forests would yield an immediate and constant supply of revenue to the federal coffers.

The advantage of a park in the Southern Appalachians would be the preservation of the forests in their primeval state. No forestry operations could be conducted within the boundaries of the park. The area would be preserved in its natural state for the

⁴⁷"Message from the President of the United States Transmitting a Report of the Secretary of Agriculture Presenting a Preliminary Report of Investigations Upon the Forests of the Southern Appalachian Mountain Region, January 16, 1901," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁴⁸Asheville Daily Citizen, November 23, 1899, pp. 1-2.

benefit of future generations. In its memorial to Congress of January 2, 1900, the Appalachian National Park Association, while calling for the creation of a park, also elaborated on the benefits of a forest reserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. According to the park association, one reason for establishing a federal preserve in the area was the prospect of a forest reserve as a paying concern. The park memorial to Congress even argued that the Southern Appalachians would provide the ideal location for a national school of forestry.⁴⁹ The objectives of a national park and a forest reserve were quite different, but the park supporters in their enthusiasm to secure a preserve in the Southern Appalachians spoke of the advantages derived from a park and a forest reserve interchangeably. With the recommendation of a forest reserve instead of a national park by the McKinley administration, the Appalachian National Park Association found itself in a dilemma. The government was now on record in support of a forest reserve and the park advocates were technically at odds with the government because their memorial asked for a national park instead of a forest reserve. Even the selection of the name Appalachian National Park Association suddenly proved to be an error.

The park proponents took immediate action to ameliorate the consternation caused by the McKinley administration's support of a

⁴⁹ Memorial to the Congress of the United States from the Appalachian National Park Association, Adopted December 19, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

forest reserve instead of a national park. Appalachian National Park Association literature dealing with the status of the movement soon appeared. The literature pointed out that the objective of the park association was the procurement of both a national park and a forest reserve for the region.⁵⁰

Following the secretary of agriculture's report on the investigation of 1900, Senator Jeter C. Pritchard drafted a bill asking for an appropriation of five million dollars to be used for the purchase of a two million acre national forest reserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Senator Pritchard's bill was introduced on January 10, 1901, and was referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.

The bill was reported back favorably by the committee on January 28, 1901.⁵¹ After meeting with initial success in the Senate, the bill failed to pass in the House. When Senator Pritchard introduced his bill, the park proponents knew that it would be extremely difficult to obtain a large appropriation for a forest preserve from an economy-minded Congress. From the start many park supporters feared that the bill was introduced too late in the

⁵⁰"Status of Appalachian Forest Reserve Movement, September, 1901," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁵¹"The Following Important Work Has Been Accomplished and Legislation Secured by the Appalachian National Park Association Since Its Organization on November 22, 1899," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

session to gain congressional approval.⁵² Dr. Chase P. Ambler was in agreement with the park advocates who believed Pritchard's bill was introduced at an inopportune time when he explained the failure of the bill in the following statement:

Owing to matters of great importance in Congress during the last few days of the past session the friends of this Appalachian National Park movement agreed that it would be unwise to push the matter in Congress at that time, for fear of offending those who are heartily in favor of the measure. I mean that by becoming too aggressive during the last days of the session when there were so many matters of great importance before Congress we might have done our cause more harm than good. However, the measure only failed by being crowded crowded [sic] out by more important matters, a canvass of the House has shown that almost without exception the members are in favor of the movement and will support it when the opportune time arrives.⁵³

The Appalachian National Park Association was undaunted by the failure to secure an early passage of the forest reserve bill and was confident that final approval of the proposed preserve would be forthcoming in the next session of Congress.

A major reason for optimism was the passage of bills by the states involved in the park matter that ceded to the federal government the right to acquire title to such land as might be desired for preserve purposes. All lands thus acquired would be exempted from taxation. When the park association presented its memorial to Congress in January of 1900, the Committee on Agriculture

⁵² Asheville Citizen, January 12, 1901, p. 1.

⁵³ [Chase P. Ambler] to the Editor of Forest and Stream, April 30, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

directed the park supporters to first obtain the approval of the states involved. It was necessary to obtain legislation in the states involved before the federal government would take any action that could possibly interfere with states' rights. The Appalachian National Park Association concentrated its efforts toward securing the desired legislation and soon produced results that complied with the Agriculture Committee's directive. On January 18, 1901, the General Assembly of North Carolina became the first state legislature to pass a bill ceding to the federal government the right to acquire title to land for preserve purposes. All lands obtained were to be exempt from taxes. The North Carolina legislature went even further than required when it passed on the same day a resolution asking North Carolina congressmen to work diligently toward the establishment of a national park in the Southern Appalachians.⁵⁴ By April, 1901, the legislatures of South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia had followed the lead of North Carolina and approved bills ceding title rights to the federal government and exempting park or forest reserve land from taxation. Park and forest reserve advocates believed that the procurement of favorable state legislation had significantly reduced congressional opposition to the establishment of a national preserve.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵"The Following Important Work Has Been Accomplished and Legislation Secured by the Appalachian National Park Association Since Its Organization on November 22, 1899," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

The only opposition of immediate concern to the park or forest reserve movement was that of "a few selfish lumbermen."⁵⁶ Private lumbermen were working assiduously against any preserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Lumber interests in western North Carolina argued that the park movement was nothing more than a monstrous plan contrived by the federal government and a handful of individuals located in Asheville to steal valuable mountain land from private owners. Of course the lumbermen's allegation did not go unanswered. It was pointed out that the only objective of the park and forest reserve movement was to protect the forests from the ravages of unscientific lumber operations.⁵⁷ From the beginning of the movement, the park association maintained that it had never opposed all cutting of timber. The harvesting of mature trees was acceptable. However, the park advocates were firmly opposed to the cutting of immature timber. All lumber operations should be conducted according to the latest principles of scientific forestry under the auspices of the federal government. Provisions had to be made to insure the preservation of forest growth for future generations.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ [Chase P. Ambler] to the Editor of Forest and Stream, April 30, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Chase P. Ambler to Messrs. Taylor and Crate, March 7, 1900, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

By 1901 it was obvious that the movement which had begun in the mountains of western North Carolina in 1899 had undergone a metamorphosis. The Appalachian National Park Association which was originally organized to labor for a national park in the Southern Appalachians had changed its goal from the establishment of a national park to the procurement of a forest reserve. Of course, it could be argued that the Appalachian National Park Association had never really understood the difference between a park and a forest reserve from the beginning. By 1901 the proponents of a preserve in the Southern Appalachian region were definitely talking in terms of a forest reserve even though they continued to use the word "park." The introduction of Senator Pritchard's bill of January 10, 1901, calling for the creation of a forest reserve instead of a park marked the end of the park association's campaign for a national park in the true sense of the word.⁵⁹

The year 1901 was a crucial one for the Appalachian National Park Association. The latter part of the year revealed more problems within the ranks of the movement. On December 4, 1901, Senator Pritchard again introduced his bill calling for an appropriation of five million dollars for the purchase of two million acres of land. Two days later Republican Congressman Walter P. Brownlow of Tennessee introduced a similar measure, but Brownlow's bill asked for an appropriation of ten million dollars to purchase four million

⁵⁹Smith, "Appalachian National Park," p. 65.

acres for a McKinley National Park and Forest Reserve in memory of the assassinated president.⁶⁰

The introduction of these two bills, while keeping the issue of a Southern Appalachian forest preserve before the Congress, unfortunately renewed discord within the movement. The introduction of two distinct bills by proponents of the preserve underlined the lack of coordination within the movement. In a letter to Representative Brownlow Dr. Ambler expounded on the problems created by the introduction of two separate bills:

However, while I am not a politician and not well versed in the methods of getting bills through Congress, it seems to me that it is unfortunate that the two bills which were presented were not identical. As I understand the matter now these are separate and distinct bills and each will have to be fought separately through both Houses, whereas, if [sic] the members introducing these bills could have had a conference and combined their bills, making the same satisfactory to both, it would have greatly simplified [sic] matters.⁶¹

Congressman Brownlow was quick to defend his sponsorship of a bill calling for a national park and forest reserve honoring the late President McKinley. In reply to Dr. Ambler's letter Brownlow said that Senator Pritchard did not arrive in Washington until the day Congress met and consequently there was no time for a conference on

⁶⁰"The Following Important Work Has Been Accomplished and Legislation Secured by the Appalachian National Park Association Since Its Organization on November 22, 1899," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁶¹Chase P. Ambler to W. P. Brownlow, December 28, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

the two bills. Brownlow maintained that the call for a park and forest reserve in the name of President McKinley would enhance the chances of obtaining any preserve in the Southern Appalachian region. If any changes were made in the bills introduced, Senator Pritchard should amend his bill to be congruent with Brownlow's bill.⁶²

After receiving Brownlow's letter, Dr. Ambler approached George Powell, president of the Appalachian National Park Association, and discussed the alternatives open to the park association since two separate bills were now before the Congress. It would be an impossible task to successfully maneuver both bills through Congress. So far the association had failed to secure the passage of any legislation even though its past efforts had been concentrated on one bill at a time. The introduction of two separate bills would probably divide the legislators supporting a Southern Appalachian preserve. Any split within the ranks of the movement would endanger the chances of passing either of the bills. The Appalachian National Park Association had to choose between Brownlow's "McKinley bill" or stick with Pritchard's bill calling for an Appalachian forest reserve. After discussing the matter thoroughly, the park association cast its lot with Senator Pritchard and their original plans for a Southern Appalachian preserve. The movement had been extensively publicized in the press and magazines under the title

⁶²W. P. Brownlow to Chase P. Ambler, December 30, 1901, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

"Appalachian National Park and Forest Reserve" and, for the good of the cause, the park association believed the name "Appalachian" should be retained.⁶³

Congressman Brownlow made no apology for his introduction of a bill calling for the establishment of a McKinley park and forest preserve. In a letter dated January 16, 1902, Brownlow told Dr. Ambler that he preferred to have harmony and cooperation over the park project. However, Brownlow crassly informed Dr. Ambler that:

. . . I do not concede to your Association the right to dictate the policy or program of myself, and I do not intend to allow your association to relegate me to any position that you see fit to occupy in this matter. If you can get along without me, I can certainly get along without you.⁶⁴

Brownlow further observed that exclusive rights to all the mountains of the South were not vested in the people of North Carolina.⁶⁵

The Brownlow incident demonstrated that influential park and forest reserve proponents outside North Carolina still believed that the Appalachian National Park Association was concerned with securing a preserve that would be situated for the most part in the mountains of western North Carolina. The incident also revealed a

⁶³ Chase P. Ambler to W. P. Brownlow, January 14, 1902, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁶⁴ W. P. Brownlow to Chase P. Ambler, January 16, 1902, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

serious lack of direction within the movement. When the Appalachian National Park Association was organized in November of 1899, its purpose was to administer the campaign for a national preserve in the Southern Appalachians. The introduction of the Brownlow bill without any conference with the Appalachian National Park Association or its spokesman in Washington, Senator Pritchard, demonstrated the park association's lack of control over leading individuals within the movement. In fact the Appalachian National Park Association's efforts to direct the movement netted resentment rather than cooperation.

While the Appalachian National Park Association was trying to deal firmly but diplomatically with Congressman Brownlow of Tennessee, the movement received a welcome boost when President Theodore Roosevelt sent a special message to Congress transmitting the official report of the secretary of agriculture's investigation of the Southern Appalachian region. In his message dated December 19, 1901, President Roosevelt heartily endorsed the conclusions reached by the secretary of agriculture's report and strongly recommended the creation of a national forest reserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. President Roosevelt argued that federal action was necessary by reason of public necessity to preserve the forests and streams of the Southern Appalachians. During the year 1901 alone, the damage done by floods in the region totaled around \$10,000,000. This sum would be sufficient to purchase the entire area that was desired for forest reserve status. The

only way to save the forests and streams of the Southern Appalachians was the inauguration of scientific forestry principles under government supervision in a national forest reserve.⁶⁶

With firm support for the movement in the executive branch of the government and in Congress, chances appeared to be favorable for the passage of one of the proposed forest reserve bills in 1902. Also, about the same time, activities of the Appalachian National Park Association were directed to produce favorable sentiment all over the country for a preserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The supporters of a Southern Appalachian preserve realized that their movement had suffered from the stigma of sectionalism in the past. In order to pick up Northern support in Congress and to eliminate criticism of the measure as a Southern proposition, the Appalachian National Park Association sent Joseph A. Holmes and Dr. Chase P. Ambler on several trips to the New England states to recruit support for the project among influential people in the North. Dr. Henry O. Marcy of Boston, the author of The Climatic Treatment of Disease: Western North Carolina as a Health Resort, and Senator Chauncey M. Depew of New York were among others who were immediately interested in the movement. Senator Depew and Dr. Henry O. Marcy labored earnestly to gain Northern congressional support

⁶⁶U. S., President, Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting a Report of the Secretary of Agriculture in Relation to the Forests, Rivers, and Mountains of the Southern Appalachian Region (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), pp. 3-5.

for the preserve. On June 7, 1902, Depew made a speech before the Senate in which he pleaded eloquently for the preservation of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The speech was published in the Congressional Record and over 75,000 copies of the speech were distributed by the park association and Senator Depew. According to Dr. Ambler, the movement ceased to be purely a Southern proposition from this point forward.⁶⁷

While the Appalachian National Park Association was winning Northern friends for the movement, progress was being made among lumber interests which had originally opposed any type of forest preserve in the region. The National Hardwood Lumber Association had bitterly opposed the proposed park and forest reserve at first. But in July, 1902, at its annual conference, the National Hardwood Lumber Association passed a resolution favoring the creation of a national forest reserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.⁶⁸ Approximately six months after the National Hardwood Lumber Association's action on the matter, the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association on December 10, 1902, endorsed the resolution passed by the National Hardwood Lumber Association. The resolution read as follows:

Resolved, That The National Hardwood Lumber Association respectfully urges upon Congress the importance of

⁶⁷ Chase P. Ambler, "The Activities of the Appalachian National Park Association and the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association, 1899-1906," 30-32, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁶⁸ Sunday Citizen (Asheville), December 13, 1925, p. 18.

establishing the proposed National Forest Reserve in the hardwood region of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, both as a means of preserving these mountains and preventing disastrous floods, and also as a means of demonstrating to the people of this country what can be done in the way of using hardwood forests, and at the same time perpetuating them for the benefit of future generations.⁶⁹

The endorsements by the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association and by the National Hardwood Lumber Association represented significant accomplishments for the Appalachian National Park Association. Unfortunately, not all lumbermen and mill operators belonged to these national associations and not all the members that did belong to the associations faithfully supported the newly adopted resolutions. Some lumber interests continued to oppose any preserve in the Southern Appalachians by circulating misinformation about the proposed forest reserve in hopes of creating adverse public opinion toward the movement. The tactic of spreading erroneous information must have met with some degree of success since the local press in Asheville ran editorials denouncing the false rumors spread against the movement. In an attempt to counter spurious information that had been circulated by "interested persons," newspapers printed the list of laws regulating forest reserves.⁷⁰ The printing of the correct laws governing the operation of a forest

⁶⁹ Action of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association Meeting, December 10th, 1902, in Favor of the Proposed National Appalachian Forest Reserve, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁷⁰ Asheville Citizen, November 24, 1902, p. 2.

reserve was quickly followed by a cartoon on the front page of the Asheville Citizen depicting "Father Time" washing down the Appalachian Mountains which had been stripped of all trees and vegetation. The bare mountainsides released a torrent of water that swept down the mountain slopes and flooded the valleys below.⁷¹ This cartoon graphically illustrated the need for forest preservation to the people of western North Carolina.

In an attempt to further publicize the proposed Appalachian forest reserve, a convention was held on October 25, 1902, in Asheville. The Appalachian Forest Reserve Convention was well attended by forest reserve proponents from states bordering North Carolina. Due to active promotion of the convention by the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce, an especially large delegation from the Tennessee city was present at the meeting.⁷² A crowd of approximately twelve hundred people attended the evening convention and viewed photographs of devastation in France caused by the destruction of forests. It was hoped that the Appalachian Forest Reserve Convention would maintain local interest in the forest reserve and increase the chances of favorable congressional action on the pending forest reserve bills.⁷³

⁷¹Ibid., November 25, 1902, p. 1.

⁷²Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1905, 151-153, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁷³Asheville Citizen, October 27, 1902, pp. 1-2.

Despite the intense campaign waged by the Appalachian National Park Association and widespread support for the proposed forest reserve throughout the nation, none of the forest reserve bills pending in Congress was allowed to pass. On April 12, 1902, Senator Joseph R. Burton of Kansas had introduced a bill in the Senate calling for an appropriation of ten million dollars to purchase four million acres for an Appalachian forest reserve.⁷⁴ Senator Burton's bill corresponded to Walter P. Brownlow's bill for a McKinley preserve introduced in the House on December 6, 1901. With the controversy between Representative Brownlow and the Appalachian National Park Association over the name of the proposed reserve ironed out, Burton's bill had the backing of both Brownlow and the park association. An amended version of the bill passed the Senate on June 24, 1902, and was sent to the House Committee on Agriculture for consideration.⁷⁵ In the House the bill reached an impasse that it could not surmount. It was reported favorably from the Committee on Agriculture but, because of the obstructionist tactics of Republican David Henderson, Speaker of the House, the measure never came before the House members for a vote. Congressman Brownlow and the Appalachian National Park Association made every

⁷⁴"The Following Important Work Has Been Accomplished and Legislation Secured by the Appalachian National Park Association Since Its Organization on November 22nd, 1899," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁷⁵Ibid.

effort possible to persuade Speaker Henderson to allow the forest reserve bill to come up for a vote. Speaker Henderson remained intransigent in his position and refused to allow House consideration of the forest reserve bill. The park association was resigned to the fact that Speaker Henderson would thwart an early passage of any Appalachian forest reserve bill, but the association still believed the measure would ultimately meet with success in some future session of Congress.⁷⁶

The optimism of the Appalachian National Park Association was soon blunted by the succession of the conservative Republican Joseph G. Cannon of Illinois to the Speaker's chair of the House of Representatives in 1903. Like his predecessor, David Henderson of Iowa, Speaker Cannon wielded his power arbitrarily and was determined to hold congressional spending down to the lowest possible level. Before he was elected Speaker, "Uncle Joe" Cannon personally informed friends of the Appalachian forest reserve that the project would receive no consideration while he held the Speaker's reins.⁷⁷ Despite presidential approval of the proposed forest reserve and increased public agitation for the preserve, Speaker Cannon remained unyielding in his position of "not one cent for scenery." To

⁷⁶ Chase P. Ambler to Harlan P. Kensey, February 2, 1903, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁷⁷ Chase P. Ambler to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Woolsey, October 24, 1903, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

Cannon's way of thinking, the federal government had better things to do with money than waste it on trees and other vistas.⁷⁸

The years from Joseph Cannon's succession to the Speaker's position until 1905 were eventful ones for the Appalachian National Park Association. On September 8, 1903, at its annual meeting in Asheville, the park association officially and belatedly changed its name to the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association.⁷⁹ The rationale behind the name change was quite obvious. Since 1901 the movement that had begun as a campaign for a national park had been transformed into a forest reserve movement. The association now realized that Congress was not interested in appropriating funds for national parks but was interested in establishing forest reserves in the East. National park bills were so unpopular in Congress that they could not clear the committees they were referred to for consideration. Many congressmen even objected to the name Appalachian National Park Association. The name Appalachian National Park Association no longer reflected the objectives of the association and was no asset in an era when conservation meant sane and orderly development of resources instead of preservation of resources in their natural state.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places: The Story of the Great Smoky Mountains (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 176.

⁷⁹ Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1905, 238-239, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁸⁰ Asheville Daily Citizen, September 9, 1903, p. 8.

In an attempt to broaden support for the Southern Appalachian forest reserve, the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association embraced the Northern campaign for a forest reserve in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. The association's action did not go unrewarded. The American Civic Association and other national organizations soon endorsed the proposed forest reserves for the Appalachian and White mountains. Circulars and handbills were distributed that argued for a total of 2,800,000 acres to be set aside for forest reserve purposes in the North and South.⁸¹

Of course support for the Appalachian forest reserve from outside the South was welcomed, but it carried with it the seeds of destruction for the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association. With national sentiment running high for the creation of eastern forest reserves, the energies of those who had originally worked zealously for the establishment of an Appalachian park were now caught up in the agitation for eastern preserves.⁸² The American Forestry Association was actively interested in the efforts to secure forest reserves for the East. At a meeting of the American Forest Congress held from January 2 to 6, 1905, the following resolution was passed:

Resolved, That this Congress approves and reaffirms the resolutions of various scientific and commercial

⁸¹"The Forest Reservations," Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁸²Smith, "Appalachian National Park," p. 65.

bodies during the past few years in favor of the establishment of national forest reserves in the Southern Appalachian Mountains, and in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and that we earnestly urge the immediate passage of bills for these purposes. . . .⁸³

This resolution was heartily endorsed by the executive committee of the American Forestry Association, and the directors of the American Forestry Association pledged that the association would work vigorously to procure a Southern Appalachian reserve.⁸⁴

A meeting of the directors of the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association was held on December 7, 1905, to consider the ramifications of the American Forestry Association's action.⁸⁵ After thorough discussion, the directors of the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association concluded that the work of pushing the forest reserve could best be handled by the American Forestry Association. Dr. Chase P. Ambler notified the American Forestry Association of his organization's decision and drafted a circular letter encouraging members of the forest reserve association to join the American Forestry Association if they still desired to assist the movement.⁸⁶ Dr. Ambler later gave the following explanation for the decision to disband the Appalachian National

⁸³Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1905, 241, Appalachian National Park Collection.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 242-245.

Forest Reserve Association:

... the movement had now become so great and the country was so vitally interested, the matter was so important, the American Forestry Association was so much larger than our Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association, its standing was so well established throughout the country that they could bring more weight to bear; and that as we had exhausted our resources in time, energy and money and as many of our members were becoming pessimistic as to our ultimate success and the bulk of the work was devolving upon three or four men, our association offered to the American Forestry Association to turn over to them our membership and let them assume the burden of carrying the matter.⁸⁷

The American Forestry Association willingly accepted responsibility for the movement and the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association was dissolved.⁸⁸

The dissolution of the Asheville based Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association ended the first organized campaign to establish a preserve in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. It would be over five years before those who had supported the forest reserve movement would witness the realization of their goal. For those who envisioned the creation of a national park, years of delay and discouragement lay before them. The establishment of a park in the mountains of western North Carolina had to await the arrival of

⁸⁷Chase P. Ambler, "The Activities of the Appalachian National Park Association and the Appalachian National Forest Reserve Association, 1899-1906," 34, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁸⁸Ibid., "Appalachian National Park," p. 45.

another generation that believed the majestic forests should be preserved in their natural state as a heritage for all Americans to come.⁸⁹

The years from 1903 to 1911 were years of struggle for the proponents of a national park in the Southern Appalachians. There was a great deal of agitation for the establishment of forest reserves in the East, and after the power of Joseph G. Cannon, Speaker of the House of Representatives, had been curbed, the Weeks Act of 1911 was passed.¹ The bill, sponsored by Representative John W. Weeks of Massachusetts, relied upon the constitutional authority of the federal government to regulate and protect the watersheds of navigable streams.² It provided for the purchase of forest land in the Southern Appalachians and White Mountains of New Hampshire. Although the Weeks Act contained no specific reference to the establishment of forest reserves, it was understood that the watersheds of navigable streams originating in the Appalachian and White mountains would be protected by the creation of national forest reserves.³

¹ Asheville Citizen, February 17, 1911, p. 4.

² Samuel P. Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 61-62.

³ Asheville Citizen, February 16, 1911, p. 1.

⁸⁹ Smith, "Appalachian National Park," p. 65.

CHAPTER II

THE MOVEMENT FOR A NATIONAL PARK IN THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS, 1905-1927

The years from 1905 to 1911 were years of hiatus for the proponents of a national park in the Southern Appalachians. There was a great deal of agitation for the establishment of forest reserves in the East, and after the power of Joseph G. Cannon, Speaker of the House of Representatives, had been curbed, the Weeks Act of 1911 was passed.¹ The bill, sponsored by Republican John W. Weeks of Massachusetts, relied upon the constitutional authority of the federal government to regulate and protect the watersheds of navigable streams.² It provided for the purchase of forest land in the Southern Appalachians and White Mountains of New Hampshire. Although the Weeks Act contained no specific reference to the establishment of forest reserves, 'it was understood that the headwaters of navigable streams originating in the Appalachian and White mountains would be protected by the creation of national forest reserves.'³

¹Asheville Citizen, February 17, 1911, p. 4.

²Samuel P. Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 47-48.

³Asheville Citizen, February 16, 1911, p. 1.

The effect of the Weeks Act was soon felt in the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. Between 1911 and 1916 a total of 61,350 acres belonging to the Little River Lumber Company in the Smoky Mountains were under option for purchase by the United States Forest Service. Over \$90,000 were spent by the Forest Service for fire control and organizing the area. Unfortunately, old Tennessee land titles were too questionable to be accepted by the federal government. The outbreak of World War I forced the price of lumber up, and the Little River Lumber Company cancelled the purchase option. Following this cancellation, the Forest Service withdrew from the Smoky Mountain region.⁴

Although advocates of a national park in western North Carolina had been forced to abandon their original goal in favor of a less controversial forest reserve, the idea of a great park was not forgotten. The passage of the Weeks Act satisfied the proponents of national forest reserves and the forest reserve movement soon ran its course. In 1916 the National Park Service was established and in 1919 an organization entitled the National Parks Association was created, adding momentum to the park movement.⁵ The early 1920's

⁴Michael Frome, Strangers in High Places: The Story of the Great Smoky Mountains (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), pp. 177-178, hereinafter cited as Frome, Strangers in High Places.

⁵Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," The North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVIII (April, 1960), 166-167, hereinafter cited as Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park."

brought a renewed interest in national parks.

A large part of the new interest in national parks centered on the Great Smoky Mountains along the North Carolina-Tennessee border. The publication of Horace Kephart's Our Southern Highlanders and Margaret Morley's The Carolina Mountains focused attention on the beauty of the Smoky Mountain forests.⁶ In December, 1923, a dinner meeting held at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D. C., marked the beginning of an active campaign to procure a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains region. The vision of a national park in the Smokies was not a new one. In 1899, when the Appalachian National Park Association was working for the creation of a national park in the Southern Appalachians, the Great Smoky Mountains had been recommended as the ideal location for a park.⁷ The original park boundary proposed by the park association in its memorial to Congress on December 19, 1899, included all of the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee.⁸

Unlike previous movements to set aside primitive areas within the Southern Appalachians, the rejuvenated park movement had its

⁶ Ibid., p. 166.

⁷ A. M. Huger to A. H. McQuilkin, October 21, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

⁸ Park Boundary as Proposed by the Memorial Committee of the Appalachian National Park Association, Adopted December 19, 1899, Appalachian National Park Association Collection.

objective clearly in mind. Director of the Park Service Stephen T. Mather, Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work, and North Carolina Congressman Zebulon Weaver of Asheville were present at the dinner meeting held at the Cosmos Club.⁹ All these influential government officials came away from the meeting with a firm resolve to secure a national park in the Southern Appalachian region. Approximately one week after the brief meeting at the Cosmos Club, Zebulon Weaver released a public statement telling of the proposal for a national park and his nomination of the Great Smoky Mountains region.¹⁰ Soon after Weaver's statement was released, western North Carolina split into various factions supporting or opposing a national park in the Great Smokies. The most formidable foes of the proposed national park were the lumber interests of western North Carolina. However, the objections of lumber interests were not the first obstacle to be cleared by the park advocates.

Early in 1924 Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work appointed a special committee to examine the Southern Appalachian Mountains and to recommend possible sites for a national park east of the Mississippi River. The committee was chaired by Congressman Henry W. Temple, Republican of Pennsylvania, and was appropriately entitled the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee. Inspection trips to various locales were conducted and every community visited

⁹ Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel, February 13, 1938, p. 13.

¹⁰ Ibid.

insisted that the perfect place for a national park was located within its immediate area. The people of Asheville actively opposed the Smokies area as the location for a park. They insisted that the best site for the park was the Linville Gorge-Grandfather Mountain region. This proposed location was fully endorsed by the Asheville Citizen, the area's most influential newspaper.¹¹

Asheville's support of the Linville Gorge-Grandfather Mountain area proved to be short lived. The Southern Appalachian National Park Commission on December 13, 1924, recommended two areas for national park status. The first park would be established in the Shenandoah region of Virginia and the second park would be situated in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee.¹² The selection of the Great Smoky Mountains and the Shenandoah region over the Linville Gorge-Grandfather Mountain area by the park committee effectively reduced the opposition of Asheville to the Smokies park. A park located anywhere in western North Carolina was better than no park at all, and most Asheville park enthusiasts backed the Smokies project.

While the recommendation of the Great Smoky Mountains for park status consolidated park supporters and reduced some opposition to the Smokies area, it also brought forth the most potentially

¹¹Frome, Strangers in High Places, pp. 180-182.

¹²Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (1st ed., rev.; Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), p. 28, hereinafter cited as Campbell, Birth of a National Park.

dangerous park opponents. The lumber industry of western North Carolina stood to lose the timber that fed its saw mills and pulp factories. The Great Smoky Mountains contained one of the last major stands of virgin forest in eastern America. In order to retain the timber in the region for their own use, the lumber interests formulated an alternative plan to the proposed national park.

The plan devised by the lumber interests called for the establishment of a national forest instead of a national park in the Smokies. The heart of the national forest scheme was the continuous utilization of the timber and other natural resources located in a national forest. Under the Weeks Act the National Forest Service could purchase land that would be administered by the Bureau of Forestry. Lands administered under the auspices of the National Forest Service were open to lumbering and other industrial uses in a coordinated effort between government and private officials. All deforestation of the national forests was to be done according to modern principles of conservation. This national forest plan was adopted officially by the Western Carolina Lumber and Timber Association.¹³

In contrast to the national forest system advocated by the lumbermen's association, the national parks were administered by the National Park Service under the Department of the Interior. The chief purpose of the national parks was to provide public recreation

¹³ Asheville Citizen, July 30, 1925, p. 22.

and at the same time maintain conservation of the area in its natural state. Under no circumstances were the national parks open to future utilization of timber and other natural resources. The park area was to remain in its primeval condition for the enjoyment of future generations. However, the federal government would develop roads and trails within the park boundary. There was no way a national forest could provide the recreational facilities and opportunities that a national park would furnish.¹⁴

After the selection of the Great Smokies by the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee as a possible location for a national park, most of the lumber companies jelled in a firm block against any park. The lumbermen realized that, if they were going to halt the establishment of a park and retain the forests for their own purposes, they would have to crush the park movement in its incipient stages before public opinion was solidly aligned behind the park.

Opposition to the national park was led by the giant of western North Carolina lumber companies--the Champion Fibre Company. The Champion Fibre Company owned a large paper mill in Canton, North Carolina, and held extensive tracts of land that would be included within the boundary of the proposed Great Smoky Mountains Park. Nearly 93,000 acres of land belonging to the Champion Fibre Company

¹⁴Ibid.; North Carolina Park Commission, A National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (Asheville: Inland Press, n.d.), unpagged.

in North Carolina and Tennessee would be lost to the park.¹⁵

Champion Fibre had more to lose than any other industry in western North Carolina if a national park were established in the Smokies. Its president and general manager, Reuben B. Robertson, assumed the leadership of the national forest campaign in an attempt to save the Champion Fibre Company's lands for timber production.

Reuben Robertson initiated his fight against the national park by saturating the local newspapers of western North Carolina with advertisements explaining his company's opposition to the proposed park. On December 2, 1925, Robertson's advertisement appeared in the Jackson County Journal. It read:

Knowing that The Champion Fibre Company is both a large user of forest products and an owner of one of the important virgin timber tracts lying within the proposed Smoky Mountain National Park area, some of our friends have asked us for an expression of the Company's policy in relation to the matter, and we believe that compliance with this request is proper.

The active officers of The Champion Fibre Company are enthusiastic and permanent citizens of North Carolina. We have approximately four hundred other stock holders of The Champion Fibre Company with holdings amounting to over one million dollars who are also citizens of North Carolina, but who are not employes. [sic]

Our plant represents the investment of millions of dollars and is intended for perpetual operation. We have about two thousand employees directly on our payrolls, citizens of North Carolina and for the most part home owners, who are vitally interested in the future of our company. There is an almost equal number of those not directly on our payroll, but who obtain their livelihood indirectly from the operations of this company.

¹⁵ Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 80.

Probably 75 percent of the acreage included in the proposed Smoky Mountain National Park has been cut over by lumber operators and is no longer virgin timber and no longer presents the museum value that has been discussed. We are absolutely convinced from many years of familiarity with timber growth that this cut over area will be restored to the desired state of forest beauty far more rapidly under methods of scientific forest management than by the process of simply letting nature take its course unaided. For this reason, we firmly believe that the cut over area should be under the management of the Forest Service, of the Federal Government, rather than under the management of a Federal Department unfamiliar with scientific forestry.

The recreational advantages of a National Forest are many and while they are different from those offered by a National Park, we are satisfied that a national [sic] Forest, properly advertised will bring forth just as many tourists into this section as a National Park. We readily understand that National Park advocates will not agree with this statement; however, the Government records and the judgement of many well qualified persons, will, we believe, fully substantiate its accuracy.

The proposed area once established as a National Park withdraws for all time and regardless of changed economic conditions one of the very large natural resources of Western North Carolina from all industrial use.

These are not underdeveloped and wild lands and though we met the Park advocates in the most cordial and cooperative spirit possible, the facts of high inherent cost acquiring these [sic] lands will have to be faced. A casual examination of the area in question with reference to expenditures that have already been made in these developments, would convince any fair-minded person familiar with such things that the off-hand estimates being used in some of the park bulletins are wholly inadequate and erroneous.¹⁶

¹⁶ Jackson County Journal, December 2, 1925, p. 4.

Reuben Robertson did not stop with his newspaper campaign against the proposed park. The Champion Fibre Company under his direction printed a brief anti-park pamphlet and disseminated it among influential state and federal officials.¹⁷ Robertson also attempted to convert Zebulon Weaver, Democratic congressman for western North Carolina, from his pro-park position to the side of the lumber interests. Robertson forwarded to Weaver a letter he received from Phillip W. Ayres, State Forester of Massachusetts. In his letter Phillip Ayres commended the lumbermen's opposition to a national park. Ayres used the White Mountain National Forest in New England as an example of the virtues found in the national forest system. He noted that relatively few people in New England would be willing to change the White Mountain National Forest into a national park. The national forest in the White Mountains provided recreation and at the same time yielded a small revenue to the federal government and to the towns engaged in lumber operations in the forest.¹⁸ Ayres' letter seemed to support the plan advanced by Champion Fibre and the Western Carolina Lumber and Timber Association.

The Champion Fibre Company was not the only firm that attempted to sway Congressman Weaver. Andrew Gennett, the owner of

¹⁷ Phillip W. Ayres to Reuben B. Robertson, December 24, 1925, Zebulon Weaver Papers, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, hereinafter cited as Weaver Papers.

¹⁸ Ibid.

the Gennett Lumber Company located in Asheville, appealed to Weaver for a compromise on the park issue. Gennett maintained that a national forest should be established taking in the larger part of the proposed park area. Approximately 100,000 acres along the crest of the Smoky Mountains could be reserved as a national park. Gennett's plan would eliminate four-fifths of the virgin timber from the park area and would leave the remaining timber for use by the lumber companies. If the park advocates would "soft-pedal on the virgin timber end of their campaign," a great deal of the lumbermen's opposition would be withdrawn.¹⁹ It was clear that Gennett's sense of compromise was geared toward the preservation of profits for the lumber business rather than the preservation of the Smokies' forests.

All attempts by Champion Fibre and other lumber interests to destroy Zebulon Weaver's allegiance to the national park movement failed. Early in 1926 Weaver politely informed Reuben Robertson and the Champion Fibre Company of his determination to continue his support of the national park. Weaver elaborated upon his decision to back the park to the fullest extent in a letter to Robertson in January of 1926:

. . . it would be impossible as a practical matter to set aside the Smoky Mountain Area as a National Forest and give it intensive development so as to make it available for recreational and museum purposes.

Every State having a National Forest would want the same treatment. . . . Of course if an area for

¹⁹ Andrew Gennett to Zebulon Weaver, December 28, 1925, Weaver Papers.

recreational and museum purposes should [be] set aside . . . there would be no difference between a Park and a National Forest so far as conservation was concerned but when we come to the matter of development and the construction of roads and the opening up of the area so as to be accessible to tourists, we immediately become aware of the difference between a National Park and a National Forest.²⁰

Weaver's loyalty to the park movement was not motivated by the desire to damage any particular industry in western North Carolina. He sincerely believed that the establishment of the Smoky Mountains park would be in the best interest of western North Carolina.²¹

If the lumber companies were disgruntled by their failure to secure tangible political support, they were even more disappointed by the growing public sentiment for the park. The park movement had an effective base of operation in Asheville and was well organized throughout western North Carolina. The North Carolina Park Commission had been created by a special session of the state legislature in 1924, with the express purpose of securing a national park within the mountains of North Carolina.²² In September, 1925, the North Carolina Park Commission, acting on the report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee, created a holding company for the purpose of receiving donations for a national park

²⁰ Zebulon Weaver to Reuben B. Robertson, January 20, 1926, Weaver Papers.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 167; George W. McCoy, A Brief History of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Movement in North Carolina (Asheville: Inland Press, 1940), pp. 33-34.

in the Smoky Mountains. The holding company was designated the Great Smoky Mountains, Inc., and it soon joined with its counterpart in Tennessee to raise \$1,000,000 by March 1, 1926.²³ All the money secured would be used to purchase land for any future park in the Smoky Mountains.

At a meeting held in the Battery Park Hotel in Asheville, plans for the state campaign committee of the North Carolina Park Commission were finalized in the fall of 1925. The campaign committee consisted of many prominent western North Carolinians. Roger Miller, manager of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, was appointed executive secretary, and Horace Kephart, the noted author and outdoorsman, was placed in charge of park publicity. Charles A. Webb, co-publisher of the Asheville Citizen, and Dan Tompkins, editor of the Jackson County Journal, were also members of the campaign committee.²⁴

The national park advocates began their drive to raise North Carolina's half of the \$1,000,000 goal by setting quotas for every county and town that stood to profit from the tourist trade brought in by the creation of a park in the Smokies. The greater part of North Carolina's share was to be raised in Jackson County, Haywood County, Swain County, and the Buncombe County-Asheville area.²⁵

²³ Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 171.

²⁴ Jackson County Journal, September 9, 1925, p. 1.

²⁵ Ibid., November 11, 1925, p. 2.

Asheville and Buncombe County were to raise \$250,000 of the \$500,000 goal designated for North Carolina.²⁶

To reach the \$500,000 goal the park proponents had to quell the broadside attack of the lumber interests and rally public opinion to their cause. With little delay the park advocates unleashed a propaganda barrage against the national forest plan backed by the lumbermen. A booklet was prepared by Horace Kephart extolling the virtues of the proposed national park and it was widely distributed throughout the area.²⁷ The most effective emissaries in the park movement's camp were the newspapers of western North Carolina. The Bryson City Times, the Jackson County Journal, and the Asheville Citizen were extremely active supporters of a national park for the Smokies.

The Jackson County Journal and the Asheville Citizen were closely connected with the park movement through employees who served on the Great Smoky Mountains, Inc., campaign committee. Both newspapers were a cogent force in refuting the national forest argument used by the lumber companies.

Dan Tompkins, editor of the Jackson County Journal, viewed the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains Park as the only means of salvation for western North Carolina. Tompkins believed that if the Smoky Mountains were left to the lumber companies the forests

²⁶Asheville Citizen, December 19, 1925, p. 1.

²⁷Jackson County Journal, August 19, 1925, p. 1.

would be reduced to desolate and ruined areas. There would be quick profits to be reaped by continued timber cutting; but, if a national park were established, it would provide a never ending source of income from tourism.²⁸ Tompkins lashed out at the Champion Fibre's advertisement which later appeared in his paper on December 2, 1925. He noted that two important points made in the advertisement were: (1) that a national forest if properly advertised would be as attractive as a national park; and (2) that if scientific methods of deforestation were used, the splendor of the Smoky Mountains would not be damaged. Tompkins maintained that the park would not seriously jeopardize the Champion Fibre Company or cost Reuben Robertson his job. The proposed park area was only a small segment of the timber lands available in North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Georgia.²⁹ Tompkins further observed:

We have examples of national forests in Jackson and most of the other mountain counties, and if a single tourist has ever come here to see them, we missed him. The lands are off the tax books, and that is about all the people know about the national forests.³⁰

As to Champion Fibre's proposal of scientific methods of deforestation as the best solution for the conservation of the Smokies, Tompkins pointed out the Balsam range as an example of the Champion Fibre Company's idea of scientific deforestation. The lands worked

²⁸Ibid., July 29, 1925, p. 4.

²⁹Ibid., November 25, 1925, p. 2.

³⁰Ibid.

by Champion Fibre and the Suncrest Lumber Company were completely desolate and wind swept.³¹ In Tompkins' mind it was absolutely clear why the Champion Fibre Company and most of the lumber companies opposed the park. They simply desired to cut the remaining timber for their own profit. It was the people of western North Carolina who would suffer in the long run from the continued destruction of the forests.

While Dan Tompkins was carrying the national park argument to the people of the Jackson County area, the Asheville Citizen was conducting an even more effective and wide-reaching campaign for the park. On November 25, 1925, the Citizen ran a cartoon on the front page of the paper. The cartoon depicted a man sleeping on a pillow entitled "indifference" as a woman veiled as "opportunity" pointed to the bedroom window. She admonished the "indifferent" gentleman to "Wake up and see the sun rise!" The sun rising through the window was labeled as the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and it was radiating dollar signs.³² Four days after this cartoon appeared, the Citizen displayed two contrasting photographs of forest land. One picture demonstrated the splendor of a primeval forest. The other picture showed another stretch of land raped by the timber companies. The caption to the photographs read, "When the life of the forest is turned into death in the wake of the juggernauts of the lumber

³¹ Ibid.

³² Asheville Citizen, November 25, 1925, p. 1.

industry, there appear the naked skeletons of former sylvan monarchs, sacrificed to feed industry that eats without thought for the moment."³³ The photographs were followed by an editorial criticizing the lumber industry and praising the national park. The Citizen maintained that the Smokies park would be a victory for conservation and at the same time provide western North Carolina with a guaranteed source of future revenue through tourism. The Citizen observed that the advertisement circulated in the newspapers by the Champion Fibre Company said that seventy-five percent of the Smokies region was cut over and only twenty-five percent of the area was virgin timber. If the life of Champion Fibre depended on that small percentage of timber, then the company could not operate for many years and it was obvious that the Champion Fibre Company would not fold from lack of timber anytime soon. They still had nine-tenths of Swain and Haywood counties and all of Graham, Clay, Cherokee, Macon, Transylvania, Polk, Henderson, and Mitchell counties to despoil.³⁴

With fertile ground being plowed for the park proponents by the western North Carolina newspapers, the Great Smoky Mountains, Inc., campaign committee stepped up its efforts to collect North Carolina's half of the \$1,000,000 goal. Park supporters traveled throughout western North Carolina carrying the park issue to the people and asking for their assistance both morally and financially.

³³Asheville Citizen, November 29, 1925, p. 2.

³⁴Ibid.

One advocate of the Smokies park, William C. Gregg, an original member of the Southern Appalachian National Park Committee, maintained that the Smokies park was a much better investment than any land boom in Florida or southern California. He claimed that within a few years after the establishment of the national park, North Carolina would grow three or four million in its population, and cities like Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Greensboro would quadruple in inhabitants as a direct result of the park. Gregg contended that a Smokies park would be worth \$40,000,000 annually to North Carolina from tourism and real estate sales.³⁵ Many of the park backers stressed Gregg's argument of economic advancement in soliciting donations and public support.

Other park spokesmen used the approach employed by Charles A. Webb. Charles A. Webb of Asheville specialized in attacking the lumber interests and their argument for a national forest. Webb singled out the Champion Fibre Company in particular and lashed out at their attempts to block the park. He noted that in Swain County alone there were more than 500,000 cords of pulp wood rotting because there was no market for the wood. According to Webb the paper mills, especially the Champion Fibre Company, were in no way faced with impending doom because of the proposed park. The Smokies park would only take around five percent of the timber lands in the region.³⁶ He maintained that the demise of the tannery industry

³⁵ Jackson County Journal, September 23, 1925, p. 4.

³⁶ Asheville Citizen, December 1, 1925, pp. 1-2.

in western North Carolina would leave Champion Fibre and its cohorts with all the wood they needed. Also Webb had heard from a reliable source that the Champion Fibre Company's plant in Canton had not used a cord of pulpwood from its own lands in western North Carolina within the last year. The Canton plant had been receiving its pulpwood by rail from the eastern part of the state.³⁷

The campaign waged by the park movement through the press and by workers who traveled through the communities of western North Carolina did produce results. Contributions came in from businesses, schools, and private individuals. Even some lumber companies were won over to the national park side. The Norwood Lumber Company located in Buncombe County gave \$1,000 to the park fund.³⁸ In Bryson City over \$3,500 was collected from lumbermen who realized what the proposed park could do for western North Carolina.³⁹

Despite the intense campaign conducted by the park advocates, the opposition of most firms within the lumber industry remained quite resolute. Mark Squires, chairman of the North Carolina Park Commission, confessed to Congressman Weaver that: "A somewhat bitter opposition from some, though not all, of the pulp and lumber interests seriously embarrassed the campaign in Asheville for a time."⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid., December 8, 1925, p. 2.

³⁸ Ibid., December 5, 1925, p. 1.

³⁹ Bryson City Times, December 3, 1925, Weaver Papers.

⁴⁰ Mark Squires to Zebulon Weaver, January 6, 1926, Weaver Papers.

In fact, when the park drive to raise the \$250,000 quota for the Buncombe County-Asheville area closed, the total fell \$90,000 short of the objective.⁴¹ By April, 1926, the North Carolina Park Commission had procured \$450,000 in subscriptions toward its half of the \$1,000,000 goal agreed upon with Tennessee. The \$450,000 figure was based on the assumption that Asheville and Buncombe County would raise the remaining portion of their quota. Only \$50,000 of the \$450,000 total came from communities and counties east of the mountains. However, the park advocates were encouraged by the State Democratic Convention held in the spring of 1926. The party adopted a plank in its platform calling for the establishment of a national park in the Smoky Mountains. It was believed that the party's behavior indicated upcoming state aid for the park from the next legislature.⁴² Park supporters were also heartened when the Buncombe County-Asheville quota was finally obtained. The fund was pushed over the top by belated subscriptions and a \$35,000 gift from the Asheville Chamber of Commerce.⁴³

Of more immediate importance than the procurement of the \$500,000 goal set for North Carolina was the passage of a bill in Congress that provided for the establishment of a national park in the Smoky Mountains and for a park in the Shenandoah

⁴¹Asheville Citizen, December 19, 1925, p. 1.

⁴²Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 172.

⁴³Frome, Strangers in High Places, p. 189.

area of Virginia. The bill had been guided through the House of Representatives by Zebulon Weaver, and cleared the House on May 14, 1926, with an unanimous vote.⁴⁴ It was soon signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge on May 22 of that year.⁴⁵

The passage of the original park bill by Congress was a major victory for the park proponents, but the law by no means assured the establishment of a national park in the Smokies. The bill merely authorized the proposed park and made no appropriation to purchase land for the park. All land was to be secured through public and state contributions. The land would then be donated to the federal government by the states of North Carolina and Tennessee. The federal government would develop the land for recreational use once a minimum of 428,000 acres was obtained.⁴⁶

The park proponents were now confronted with the task of raising funds necessary to purchase the minimum park acreage. They realized that a state appropriation was the only feasible way to acquire the large sum of money needed to buy the land. It had taken an all out effort just to raise the earlier goal of \$500,000 through subscriptions. Now the vast amounts of land held by the pulp and paper companies had to be secured. The North Carolina Park

⁴⁴U. S., Congress, House, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 1926, Congressional Record, LXVII, 9450.

⁴⁵Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 44.

⁴⁶U. S., Congress, House, 69th Cong., 1st sess., 1926, Congressional Record, LXVII, 9455-9459.

Commission quickly drafted a bill that increased its powers and provided a \$2,000,000 state appropriation for the purchase of park land. The park commission hoped to get the bill through the state legislature early in 1927.⁴⁷ In the process of pushing the bill through the legislature, the park advocates collided head-on with the lumber interests again. As usual, the opposition to the national park was led by Reuben Robertson and the Champion Fibre Company.

After the passage of the original park bill of May 22, 1926, it had been believed that much of the lumbermen's opposition to the national park would subside.⁴⁸ Their image had suffered from the attacks of local newspapers and park supporters. The lumber industry had been portrayed as standing in the way of regional progress for its own selfish benefit. Much of the national forest argument used by the lumbermen had been refuted. The Champion Fibre Company's contention that their plant in Canton would be closed by the establishment of the park lost much of its impact because of the promise of revenue through tourism.

With the North Carolina Park Commission's bill for a \$2,000,000 state appropriation before the legislature, the lumbermen made one last effort to block the Smokies park. Reuben Robertson sent Haywood Parker and Joseph Pratt to Raleigh as lobbyists against

⁴⁷ Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 174.

⁴⁸ Jackson County Journal, February 9, 1927, p. 1.

the park.⁴⁹ The two Champion Fibre lawyers were not alone. The lumber interests had a lobby of around twenty workers attempting to defeat the impending bill.⁵⁰

When news of the lumber companies' activities in Raleigh reached western North Carolina, the newspapers lashed out at the lumbermen with vengeance. The conflict between the park proponents and the lumbermen was portrayed as "a fight between nearsightedness and farsightedness; a battle between those who love their state, and are anxious that she shall continue in her glory and those who believe that the natural resources of the country are the property of a few men of this generation, and that the coming generations are not to be considered."⁵¹ As to the pulp and lumber lobby's charge that the proposed \$2,000,000 expenditure for the park was not in keeping with sound fiscal policy, it was made clear that the Champion Fibre Company and other lumber companies would be against the Smokies park if it did not cost one cent.⁵²

The lumbermen's fight against the proposed \$2,000,000 state appropriation met with little success. By now the establishment of a national park in the Smoky Mountains had lost its gloss of regionalism and had become a state-wide issue. Governor Angus W. McLean

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Asheville Citizen, February 9, 1927, p. 2.

⁵¹ Jackson County Journal, February 9, 1927, p. 4.

⁵² Asheville Citizen, February 10, 1927, p. 4.

finally endorsed the proposed bill after it passed the North Carolina Senate, and the House enacted the bill into law by a vote of 99 to 10 on February 22, 1927.⁵³ About the only sympathy that the Champion Fibre Company procured in Raleigh was the wish that "the two able attorneys received large fees, for they earned it talking in tones of dollars against the most commanding appeal to preservation of God's greatest gift to North Carolina and Tennessee."⁵⁴

With the passage of the \$2,000,000 state appropriation, the park issue was finally decided. If there was to be a preserve in the Great Smokies, it would indeed be a park and not a forest reserve. The proponents of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park had won a hard fought and bitter struggle against the lumber industry of western North Carolina. It would be thirteen years before the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was officially dedicated, but one of the major obstacles to its creation had been successfully hurdled by the spring of 1927.

In all fairness to the lumber industry and especially the Champion Fibre Company, it must be pointed out that the pulp and lumber companies' prediction of plant closings might have materialized if a new process of paper making had not been discovered. The discovery involved the substitution of pine fiber for spruce

⁵³News and Observer (Raleigh), February 23, 1927, p. 3.

⁵⁴Ibid., February 11, 1927, p. 4.

fiber in the paper making process. It was not until the park commissions of North Carolina and Tennessee had acquired the bulk of Champion Fibre's land in the spring of 1931 that the new process was developed. According to Reuben Robertson, ninety-two percent of the spruce forests owned by the Champion Fibre Company was taken by the park. Robertson maintained that the Canton plant would have been forced to close if the pine substitution process had not been developed by Champion Fibre's research scientists. As it turned out, the pine substitution process proved to be more profitable than the old spruce process had been to the company.⁵⁵

However, it must also be noted that the Champion Fibre Company never fully explained its "complete dependence" upon the spruce forests when it was actively opposing the campaign for a national park. On February 23, 1927, the day after the bill appropriating \$2,000,000 to the park was passed, Champion Fibre purchased a 50,000 acre tract of hemlock forest in Graham County.⁵⁶ This purchase would appear to be quite irrational for a company that was faced with impending doom, especially when its existence depended totally on spruce wood.

When all the rhetoric and animosities among proponents and opponents of the Smokies park passed into history, a more objective view of the conflict emerged. In some ways the struggle between the

⁵⁵Campbell, Birth of a National Park, pp. 92-95.

⁵⁶Asheville Citizen, February 23, 1927, p. 1.

lumbermen and the park advocates was a classic battle between conservation and industrial consumption. It was also a confrontation between two different forms of business activity--tourism versus manufacturing. After examining the various arguments over the park with the benefit of historical perspective, one definite conclusion can be drawn. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park was neither the panacea for all of western North Carolina's ills, nor the anathema that some predicted. Even if the creation of the national park had eventually destroyed the lumber industry in western North Carolina, it was obvious that the people had made a decision between the park and the lumber industry. They chose the Smokies park.

The 500 acres encompassed by the Great Smoky Mountains National Park had been secured and accepted by the federal government in 1906 from the state.

The idea behind the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was not new. All of the National Parks established had been created from lands that were already in the hands of the federal government. The land for the park was in the hands of private individuals and was the 500 acres.

Carroll, G. (1906). The Great Smoky Mountains National Park. (1st ed.). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

CHAPTER III

THE CONSUMMATION OF A LONG CAMPAIGN: THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK BECOMES A REALITY, 1927-1940

The people of western North Carolina decided in 1927 that the creation of a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains was a desirable objective, but years of frustration and hard work lay ahead before the park would actually be established. When the original park bill passed the House of Representatives on May 14, 1926, it was amended to permit the federal government to accept the Smokies park area for protection and administration as soon as 150,000 acres had been transferred to the government. The park would be considered established and ready for development when the major portion of the 704,000 acres authorized for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park had been secured and accepted by the federal government as a gift from the states.¹

The idea behind the Great Smokies park was unique in national park history. All of the eighteen national parks previously established had been created from lands that were already the property of the federal government. The land for the proposed park was in the hands of private individuals totaling more than 6,600 different

¹ Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains (1st ed., rev.; Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), p. 44, hereinafter cited as Campbell, Birth of a National Park.

tracts. It was to be acquired by state purchase and private contributors and title to the land would be given to the federal government.²

The \$2,000,000 park appropriation ratified by the North Carolina legislature on February 25, 1927, was to be secured through the issuance of state bonds. The bill had been guided through the legislature by Mark Squires, chairman of the North Carolina Park Commission, and Dr. Eugene Brooks, secretary of the commission. There were two safety provisions built into the bill. North Carolina money would not be available until Tennessee provided a like amount and no money would be forthcoming until enough funds were on hand to assure the completion of the Smokies park. The Tennessee legislature quickly responded to the North Carolina challenge with an appropriation of \$1,500,000 in the form of state bonds to buy park land in Tennessee, and a \$500,000 credit for 76,507 acres of the Little River Lumber Company's land already secured was approved.³

The passage of appropriations by the state legislatures of North Carolina and Tennessee appeared at first to provide enough money to complete the purchase of park land. However, it soon became apparent that state money and private subscriptions would fall well below what was needed to purchase the land. Private subscriptions had produced more promises than funds, and it was now estimated that

²Ibid., p. 12.

³Ibid., pp. 50-52.

a total of \$10,000,000 would be necessary to complete the Smokies park.⁴ The park supporters in North Carolina and Tennessee were forced to turn to outside help, and Associate Director of the National Park Service Arno B. Cammerer, realizing the desperate plight of the park movement, enlisted the support of the Rockefeller Foundation.⁵ Cammerer was a personal friend of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and as a result of the efforts of Cammerer and others interested in the Smokies park, a gift of \$5,000,000 was obtained for land purchase. The \$5,000,000 gift was to come from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial and would be available as soon as the states of North Carolina and Tennessee issued their bonds for purchase of park land. On March 6, 1928, the Rockefeller contribution of \$5,000,000 was announced to the public.⁶ Without this gift the Smokies park could have collapsed in its embryonic stage because of financial woes.

Besides providing the \$2,000,000 appropriation to purchase park land, the North Carolina General Assembly's Park Act of February 25, 1927, created an eleven member park commission. The North Carolina Park Commission was authorized to acquire North Carolina's portion of park land through state purchase and was empowered to condemn property for park purposes if necessary.⁷

⁴Ibid., p. 59.

⁵Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel, February 13, 1938, p. 13.

⁶Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 61.

⁷North Carolina, Public Laws and Resolutions (1927), ch. 48, pp. 53-64.

The procurement of the \$5,000,000 gift from the Rockefeller Foundation allowed the park commission to begin the laborious task of establishing the park. The park commission established by the Park Act of February 25, 1927, was composed of the members of the existing commission organized in 1924. Mark Squires was again elected chairman and the executive committee of the park commission chose Verne Rhoades of Asheville for the position of executive secretary. Rhoades was responsible for the purchase of all park land comprising the North Carolina section of the park, and on April 16, 1928, the park commission directed him to begin the condemnation of land lying within the park's boundary.⁸

As soon as the work of surveying, examining land titles, and ascertaining property values began, the park commission was faced with another stiff challenge from the lumber interests of western North Carolina. The park commission tried to avoid condemnation proceedings when possible. It was especially reluctant to condemn the holdings of small land owners within the park area and the commission believed that the bulk of the land could be purchased without opposition.⁹ To protect the timber on property that would eventually be part of the Smokies park, the park commission entered

⁸Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," The North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVIII (April, 1960), 168-177, herein-after cited as Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park."

⁹Sunday Citizen (Asheville), August 5, 1928, p. 1.

into gentlemen's agreements with major lumber companies in western North Carolina. Of particular note were the agreements with the Champion Fibre Company and the Suncrest Lumber Company. The Champion Fibre Company was quite cooperative and ceased lumber operations on its lands located within the park area.¹⁰ In sharp contrast to the attitude and demeanor displayed by the Champion Fibre Company, the Suncrest Lumber Company exhibited a disposition marked by recalcitrance and belligerence toward the park commission and the proposed park.

The Suncrest Lumber Company operated a double band saw mill in Waynesville, North Carolina and owned approximately 38,000 acres of timber in the western part of the state. Because of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Suncrest was faced with the impending loss of 26,000 acres of forest land that would be absorbed by the park. On the 26,000 acres located within the park area, Suncrest had constructed a standard guage railroad to facilitate its logging operations.¹¹

On April 26, 1928, the North Carolina Park Commission and the Suncrest Lumber Company entered into a compromise agreement on Suncrest's operations in the park area. According to the terms of the April 26th agreement, Suncrest would be allowed to remove from its lands timber already cut. The lumber company also would be

¹⁰ Asheville Citizen, June 22, 1928, p. 1.

¹¹ Ibid., June 21, 1928, p. 1.

permitted to remove timber in the Round Bottom Creek section of its lands with a time limit set for five months after April 26th.

Mr. Arthur Stevens, president of Suncrest, was to confer with the company's board of directors, and Stevens was to report to the park commission the company's proposition as to the sale of its lands within a thirty day period.¹²

After considering the alternatives open to it, the Suncrest Lumber Company decided to ignore the April 26, 1928, agreement with the North Carolina Park Commission and openly challenged the commission and the constitutionality of the North Carolina Park Act of 1927 that had created the commission. Suncrest quickly obtained a temporary restraining order that prevented the park commission from interfering with lumber operations on the 26,000 acres of land intended to be within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In the decree signed by Judge E. Yates Webb of the United States District Court, Suncrest maintained that it had constructed a large and expensive mill in Waynesville and a railroad for the purpose of logging. Because of the termination of lumber operations on most of its property which would fall within the park area, Suncrest contended that it had already lost \$30,000. Suncrest furthermore maintained that 214,000 acres included in the North Carolina side of the park were worth \$8,000,000 and that the park commission had failed to acquire sufficient funds to purchase these lands. It was

¹²Ibid., July 17, 1928, p. 3.

asserted that the act of the North Carolina legislature establishing the park commission and investing the commission with the power of condemnation violated the Fifth Article and Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution because it authorized the confiscation of property without due process of law. Suncrest believed the North Carolina Park Commission would soon seek an injunction restraining all logging by the company within the park area. If an injunction was secured by the park commission, Suncrest would be unable to operate its Waynesville mill at a capacity that would allow the company to fulfill orders already accepted.¹³

The North Carolina Park Commission contemplated a vigorous legal fight to prevent the nullification of the Smokies park through the injunction proceedings instituted by the Suncrest Lumber Company in the federal district court. Dennis G. Brummitt, attorney general of North Carolina, designated L. R. Varner of Lumberton and A. L. Brooks of Greensboro as legal aids to assist him in representing the park commission.¹⁴ A comprehensive answer to the Suncrest suit was filed by the North Carolina Park Commission on July 16, 1928. The park commission maintained that the lumber company acted with impulsive haste in seeking an injunction since the commission had not yet begun to condemn lands. To the charge that the North Carolina General Assembly had created the park commission in an

¹³ Asheville Citizen, June 21, 1928, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴ Ibid., June 23, 1928, p. 1.

unconstitutional fashion, it was argued that the legislature's authorization of the acquisition of property for the Smokies park and the necessity of procuring the lands desired was not a matter within the jurisdiction of any court. The park commission alleged that the value placed on land within the park area by Suncrest was exorbitant. According to the official tax records of Haywood and Swain counties, the lands owned by Suncrest had an aggregate value of only \$352,409. It was noted that around 7,000 acres of the 26,000 acres owned by Suncrest within the park boundary was cutover land of little worth to the lumber company.¹⁵

Litigation over the lands of the Suncrest Lumber Company was a major obstacle to the early acquisition of North Carolina's portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The procurement of the temporary restraining order by the lumber company from Judge E. Yates Webb in federal court prevented the North Carolina Park Commission from condemning Suncrest's property in the state court. Judge Webb eventually changed his temporary order against the park commission to a permanent restraining order. In the federal courts the Suncrest case made the rounds of Huntington, West Virginia; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Washington, D. C. A three-judge court, upon appeal by the park commission, ruled in Huntington, West Virginia, that it would necessitate a three-judge court to award the restraining order

¹⁵ Asheville Citizen, July 17, 1928, p. 1.

originally granted to the company by Judge Webb.¹⁶ In compliance with the ruling handed down in Huntington, the case was brought before a three-judge court sitting in Charlotte, North Carolina. On January 14, 1929, the three-judge federal court denied the company's request for an injunction restraining the park commission from carrying out condemnation proceedings against Suncrest's lands.¹⁷

In a final attempt to obtain an injunction through the federal court system, Suncrest announced its intention of appealing the Charlotte decision to the United States Supreme Court.¹⁸ However, the lumber company's plans were dealt a crushing blow by Chief Justice William H. Taft on January 17, 1929, when he refused Suncrest's appeal for an injunction.¹⁹ Because of Chief Justice Taft's unfavorable decision, the case never came before the Supreme Court and the matter was finally disposed of in the federal courts.²⁰

The ruling by Chief Justice Taft allowed the park commission to institute condemnation proceedings in state courts. Prior to the decision by Taft, the park commission had been frustrated in its efforts to stop the cutting of timber within the park area because of

¹⁶ Ibid., October 2, 1931, p. 13.

¹⁷ Ibid., January 15, 1929, p. 1.

¹⁸ Ibid., January 16, 1929, p. 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., January 18, 1929, p. 1.

²⁰ Ibid., October 2, 1931, p. 13.

Suncrest's successful litigation moves.²¹ Subsequent to the favorable ruling by Chief Justice Taft, the park commission obtained a temporary restraining order from Judge Pender A. McElroy on January 17, 1929, that ended Suncrest's lumber operations within the park boundary.²² It was estimated that 1,000 acres of the 26,000 acres owned by Suncrest in the park had been cut over before the restraining order was secured.²³ On April 3, 1929, the North Carolina Supreme Court upheld Judge McElroy's decision to grant a restraining order against Suncrest's operations within the park area. The state supreme court ruled against Suncrest's argument that injunction proceedings if legitimate should have been carried out in the name of the state of North Carolina instead of the park commission. Suncrest had also maintained that the state was not authorized to initiate such proceedings and that Mark Squires as chairman of the park commission was not a state official and therefore could not certify the petition for an injunction.²⁴

The North Carolina Supreme Court's decision was another major victory for the park commission. Following the commission's procurement of an injunction and the initiation of condemnation proceedings against Suncrest's property, the lumber company closed all of its

²¹ Asheville Citizen, January 18, 1929, p. 3.

²² Ibid., p. 1.

²³ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁴ Asheville Citizen, April 4, 1929, p. 1.

facilities. Suncrest then filed an answer to the legal action taken by the park commission. In its brief Suncrest claimed that its damages and property values totaled approximately \$3,000,000. The park commission asserted that the true value of Suncrest's holdings was not more than \$400,000.²⁵ In an attempt to determine a just price for Suncrest's property and to ascertain damages incurred by the company incident to park commission interference, the case went before a special commission composed of Judge James S. Manning of Raleigh, W. N. Garrett of Asheville, and T. Lenoir Gwyn of Waynesville.²⁶ The park commission was represented by a battery of able lawyers comprised of Judge Frank Carter, A. Hall Johnson, and Zebulon Weaver. After hearing two weeks of detailed testimony and two days of legal arguments, the special commission ruled in favor of the park commission on September 30, 1931, when it announced that \$522,255.33 was an equitable valuation for Suncrest's property.²⁷ A notice of appeal was filed after the special commission rendered its decision, but the appeal never came to trial in superior court.²⁸ After another year of delay, a settlement was finally negotiated between Suncrest and the park commission. Four years of bitter litigation were brought to an end when Suncrest agreed to accept the

²⁵ Ibid., October 1, 1931, p. 1.

²⁶ Ibid., October 2, 1931, p. 13.

²⁷ Ibid., October 1, 1931, pp. 1-2.

²⁸ Ibid., September 25, 1932, p. 1.

park commission's offer of \$600,000 for a tract of 32,853.33 acres.²⁹

The deal was consummated on September 30, 1932, and Suncrest's acreage was in the possession of the park commission at last.³⁰

Although the Suncrest case achieved widespread notoriety and represented the first serious test of the park commission's power to condemn lands for park purposes, it was by no means the most important tract to be acquired on the North Carolina side of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. In retrospect the procurement of the land owned by the Champion Fibre Company was essential to the establishment of the park. The property owned by Champion Fibre in North Carolina and Tennessee totaled 92,814.5 acres and was the largest tract to be included in the Smokies park. Besides being the largest tract in the park, it was the crux of the park containing several of the loftiest mountains and the best stands of mixed virgin timber in the region.³¹ The tract included the boundary between North Carolina and Tennessee for a stretch of eighteen miles and never was less than a mile above sea level in elevation.³² Over 53,000 acres of the Champion Fibre Company's land were located on the

²⁹"Report of the North Carolina Park Commission," January 2, 1933, p. 3, Governor's Papers, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Governor's Papers.

³⁰Asheville Citizen, October 1, 1932, p. 1.

³¹Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 80.

³²Asheville Citizen, April 30, 1931, p. 2.

North Carolina side of the park and had to be obtained by the North Carolina Park Commission.³³

and Champion Fibre under the leadership of Reuben B. Robertson, its president, had vigorously opposed the Great Smokies Park until the passage of the North Carolina Park Act in February of 1927. After the appropriation of \$2,000,000 by the North Carolina General Assembly for purchase of park land, Robertson's company dropped its campaign against the proposed park. Champion Fibre realized that the people of western North Carolina overwhelmingly favored the creation of a national park in the Smoky Mountains and, in sharp contrast to the belligerent attitude of the Suncrest Lumber Company, attempted to cooperate with park officials by not cutting timber on its land within the park area.³⁴

Both the North Carolina Park Commission and the Tennessee Park Commission were hopeful that Champion Fibre's acreage could be obtained at a reasonable price without delay and complication. The two state park commissions met and after thorough deliberation decided upon an offer to be made to the Champion Fibre Company. Chairman Mark Squires of the North Carolina commission and Chairman David Chapman of the Tennessee commission were directed to meet with Reuben Robertson and discuss the procurement of the company's

³³Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 87.

³⁴Asheville Citizen, June 22, 1928, p. 1.

property.³⁵ Preliminary negotiations for the acquisition of Champion Fibre's holdings were held in November of 1929.³⁶ Squires and Chapman tendered the offer agreed upon by their respective commissions, and it was rejected by Reuben Robertson. The negotiations with Robertson revealed that the valuations placed upon the land by Champion Fibre and the state park commissions were not likely to be reconciled. After full and open discussion, it was determined that the only course open to the principals involved was the institution of condemnation proceedings to obtain the property of the Champion Fibre Company.³⁷ On November 14, 1929, Mark Squires directed the North Carolina Park Commission lawyers to begin assembling data so that litigation could be started as soon as possible. However, Squires noted that condemnation proceedings could be terminated if the park commission and Champion Fibre concurred on a price for the land out of court.³⁸

The decision to initiate condemnation proceedings against the Champion Fibre Company obliterated any real chance for an early acquisition of the desired land. Because North Carolina's condemnation laws were superior to those of Tennessee, the Tennessee

³⁵ Mark Squires to E. C. Brooks, November 14, 1929, Eugene Clyde Brooks Papers, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Brooks Papers.

³⁶ Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 81.

³⁷ Mark Squires to E. C. Brooks, November 14, 1929, Brooks Papers.

³⁸ Ibid.

Park Commission urged its North Carolina counterpart to file the first suit against the company. Although the Tennessee officials wanted North Carolina to take the initial step, they grew impatient with North Carolina's failure to take immediate legal action against Champion Fibre and on January 1, 1930, the Tennessee Park Commission filed a condemnation suit in circuit court in Sevierville, Tennessee.³⁹ Before the Tennessee Park Commission filed its suit against the Champion Fibre Company, Reuben Robertson had informed the North Carolina Park Commission that his company was considering the resumption of logging operations on its property within the park area. Robertson pointed out that Champion Fibre had suspended operations in the park area for approximately eighteen months and as a consequence the company was losing money. He further noted that Champion Fibre had been quite patient in giving the park commission every opportunity to reach a settlement out of court. Robertson maintained that the park commission had made no substantial offer for his company's land. In fact the most recent offer, which Robertson turned down in November of 1929, was only an oral one and was never presented in writing. Despite the futility of past efforts to negotiate an agreement, the Champion Fibre Company was still willing to cooperate with park officials but desired more consideration for its own rights from the North Carolina Park Commission.⁴⁰

³⁹ Campbell, Birth of a National Park, pp. 81-82.

⁴⁰ Reuben B. Robertson to the North Carolina Park Commission, December 6, 1929, Brooks Papers.

While the North Carolina Park Commission was carefully gathering information for condemnation proceedings against Champion Fibre and at the same time trying to reach a settlement with the company out of court, little progress was being made on the Tennessee Park Commission's suit. Six weeks after the Tennessee Commission filed its condemnation suit, the Champion Fibre Company filed a demurrer. It was not until November 17, 1930, that the actual trial of the case began in Sevierville. A five-man jury of view was selected to hear the testimony of witnesses for Champion Fibre and the park commission, and then decide upon a fair price for the company's 39,549 acres in the Tennessee portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.⁴¹ Expert witnesses for the company testified that the tract contained the finest spruce timber in the United States and estimates of its value ranged from \$4,000,000 to \$7,000,000. Reputable witnesses for the Tennessee Park Commission valued the land in question at from \$300,000 to \$800,000.⁴² After listening to the arguments of the park commission and Champion Fibre, the jury of view on January 16, 1931, awarded the company \$2,325,000 for its property and an additional \$225,000 for incidental damages to its plant in Canton, North Carolina. The verdict of the five-man jury of view was undoubtedly a crushing blow to the Tennessee Park Commission. According to David Chapman, the park commission had only

⁴¹Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 82.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 82-83.

\$1,900,000 to buy all the land needed for the Smokies park on the Tennessee side.⁴³

If the jury of view's total award of \$2,550,000 for Champion Fibre's acreage in Tennessee alone was allowed to stand, the entire park movement could be in jeopardy. Shortly after the jury of view handed down its decision, park officials received more bad news. On January 22, 1931, Reuben Robertson announced that his company would resume timber operations on its land in Tennessee as soon as weather conditions were favorable. A crew of approximately one hundred men would be sent into the area and at least one mill would be placed in operation.⁴⁴ However, Champion Fibre's decision to begin logging its Tennessee land again in no way affected the company's policy towards its North Carolina property. Since Champion Fibre was still negotiating with the North Carolina Park Commission, the company would continue voluntary suspension of timber operations on the North Carolina side of the park.⁴⁵ The Tennessee Park Commission responded quickly to the action of the Champion Fibre Company by appealing the jury of view's decision.⁴⁶ If Champion Fibre attempted to cut lumber on the Tennessee side of

⁴³ Asheville Citizen, January 16, 1931, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., January 23, 1931, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1, p. 12.

⁴⁶ Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 84.

the park, David Chapman said the Tennessee Park Commission would seek an injunction against the company to prevent any removal of timber.⁴⁷

Just as negotiations between the Champion Fibre Company and the park commissions appeared to be on the verge of collapse, Director of the National Park Service Horace Albright invited company and park officials to a conference in Washington, D. C. After three days of discussion an agreement was reached on April 29, 1931, for the purchase of Champion Fibre's land in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.⁴⁸ Champion Fibre agreed to sell its tract of 92,814.5 acres for a price of \$3,000,000. The park commissions later decided that North Carolina would pay \$2,000,000 for the 53,265.5 acres of the company's land situated on its side of the park and that Tennessee would pay \$1,000,000 for the remaining 39,549 acres located on its half of the park.⁴⁹

The acquisition of the Champion Fibre Company's land was a momentous step forward for the park commissions of North Carolina and Tennessee. While Reuben Robertson had few words of praise for the Tennessee Park Commission headed by David Chapman, he did commend the North Carolina Park Commission and its officials for the exemplary manner in which the commission conducted itself throughout the negotiations. Robertson especially praised Dr. E. C. Brooks,

⁴⁷ Asheville Citizen, January 23, 1931, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid., April 30, 1931, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 87.

secretary of the North Carolina Park Commission, for his display of skill and statesmanship in guiding the matter to an acceptable conclusion.⁵⁰ Although the Champion Fibre Company agreed to accept \$3,000,000 for its holdings within the park, Robertson maintained that the company did so in full knowledge that it had not been adequately compensated for the property. According to Robertson, the Champion Fibre Company had simply decided to make a graceful bow to the ineluctable establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.⁵¹

The procurement of the lands owned by the Champion Fibre Company and the Suncrest Lumber Company left only one large tract to be obtained on the North Carolina side of the Smokies park. The remaining tract was owned by the Ravensford Lumber Company and contained 32,709.57 acres.⁵² As early as 1930 the park commissions of North Carolina and Tennessee had acquired more than the 150,000 acres required before the park could be administered and protected by the National Park Service. This was accomplished on February 6, 1930, when Governor O. Max Gardner of North Carolina and Governor Henry H. Horton of Tennessee officially presented deeds to Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur that brought the total acreage

⁵⁰ Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," pp. 179-180.

⁵¹ Asheville Citizen-Times, May 3, 1931, p. 1.

⁵² Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 180.

secured for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to 158,799.21 acres.⁵³ The original park act of 1926 provided that the Smokies park would be considered established and ready for development when the major portion of the 704,000 acres was obtained and transferred to the federal government.⁵⁴ However, the National Park Service decided to increase the minimum acreage required for development and establishment of the park. The National Park Service let it be known that the development of the park on a large scale would not be begun until a more sizable portion of the park had been obtained by the state park commissions.⁵⁵ The requirement for full development was set at 428,000 acres, of which North Carolina had to acquire 214,000 acres.⁵⁶ By January of 1933 the North Carolina Park Commission had procured 138,463 acres and had transferred title to the property to the National Park Service.⁵⁷

While the North Carolina Park Commission was engaged in the tedious task of securing park land in North Carolina, there was growing opposition to the commission's activities. The depression

⁵³U. S., Department of Interior, Final Report of the Southern Appalachian National Park Commission to the Secretary of the Interior, June 30, 1931 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1931), pp. 31-32.

⁵⁴Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 173.

⁵⁵Campbell, Birth of a National Park, p. 103.

⁵⁶Sunday Citizen (Asheville), June 30, 1929, p. 1.

⁵⁷Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 180.

was beginning to be felt in North Carolina and members of the North Carolina legislature who had no interest in the park project took out their frustrations on the park commission and its officials.⁵⁸ Opposition to the park commission centered on \$51,000 in park funds that were lost in the failure of the Central Bank and Trust Company in Asheville.⁵⁹ When Dr. E. C. Brooks, secretary of the park commission, filed the commission's official report on March 4, 1931, all employees, salaries, duties and legal fees were enumerated in detail. This was done at the request of the General Assembly.⁶⁰ The General Assembly of 1931 finally enacted legislation that called for the retirement of the present park commission in January of 1933 and the appointment of a new commission by the governor. The act also directed the state auditor to examine all the financial records of the park commission.⁶¹

In 1933 the General Assembly further demonstrated its displeasure with the park commission. The North Carolina economy was in dismal shape and critics of the park commission assailed what they considered to be profligate expenditures by the commission. Senator William O. Burgin of Davidson County introduced a bill that would dissolve the park commission and transfer its duties to the State

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 179.

⁵⁹Asheville Citizen, March 4, 1931, p. 1.

⁶⁰Ibid., March 5, 1931, p. 1.

⁶¹Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 179.

Board of Conservation and Development. Senator Burgin's bill caught the park supporters by surprise when it passed the Senate without a dissenting vote. Some park commission proponents threatened to retaliate by introducing legislation to abolish the State Board of Conservation and Development.⁶² Many state and federal officials rallied to the aid of the park commission. Among those who spoke out against Burgin's bill was Associate Director of the National Park Service Arno B. Cammerer. Cammerer warned that any drastic change in the existing system might endanger the successful completion of the Smokies park. He did not defend the staff and officials of the park commission as individuals but argued the viability of the commission as an independent agency.⁶³

Senator Burgin's efforts to eliminate the park commission were blunted when his bill was recalled to the Senate and was then reported unfavorably by the Senate Committee on Reorganization.⁶⁴ But the General Assembly did enact legislation that reduced the membership of the park commission from eleven to five members and ordered an investigation of the old commission's activities.⁶⁵ On July 18, 1933, Governor John Christoph Blucher Ehringhaus acquiesced to the wishes of the General Assembly and appointed a totally new commission

⁶² Asheville Citizen, February 3, 1933, p. 1.

⁶³ Ibid., February 9, 1933, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Ibid., April 3, 1933, p. 2.

⁶⁵ Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 182.

chaired by Will W. Neal of Marion, North Carolina.⁶⁶

Although the North Carolina Park Commission did undergo re-organization, it fared better than its counterpart in Tennessee. At the same time that the North Carolina Park Commission was being overhauled by the General Assembly, the Tennessee Park Commission was being revamped. The Tennessee legislature eventually abolished the commission and in 1933 turned its duties over to the State Park and Forestry Commission.⁶⁷

Governor J. C. B. Ehringhaus was the recipient of a large amount of testimony concerning the performance of the original North Carolina Park Commission. In the testimony it was pointed out that the Rockefeller Foundation had kept a close watch on the expenditures of the park commission and had been satisfied with the commission's operations. The testimony revealed that the park commission had done a commendable job in carrying out a difficult task. Most of the criticism directed toward the park commission could be traced to economy-minded members of the General Assembly who used the commission as a whipping boy.⁶⁸

While the North Carolina Park Commission endured the scrutiny of the General Assembly, progress toward the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was threatened by an old nemesis.

⁶⁶ Asheville Citizen, July 19, 1933, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Asheville Citizen-Times, April 9, 1933, sec. A, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 183.

Park funds were almost exhausted. The cost of condemnation proceedings and the awards by juries had been high. Of the \$397,174.67 pledged to the park commission by private citizens and companies, only \$146,233.84 had been collected.⁶⁹ The defaultment on many subscriptions to the park fund was accompanied by an increase in the official acreage requirement for the North Carolina portion of the park. The park area in North Carolina was raised from 214,000 acres to a total of 228,960 acres.⁷⁰ Because of these adverse developments, it was obvious that additional funds would be necessary to complete the purchase of park land.

Representative Zebulon Weaver of the eleventh district of North Carolina attempted to obtain from the federal government the money needed to complete the park. Weaver introduced a bill in the Congress asking the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for \$1,500,000 to complete the Smokies park.⁷¹ When Weaver failed to get his bill through Congress, the only alternative left to park officials was to ask President Franklin D. Roosevelt for assistance. President Roosevelt demonstrated his desire to have the park established by his executive order of December 28, 1933, making \$1,550,000 available from the Civilian Conservation Corps' funds.⁷²

⁶⁹"Report of the North Carolina Park Commission," January 2, 1933, p. 7, Governor's Papers.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 1.

⁷¹Asheville Citizen-Times, June 12, 1932, p. 1.

⁷²Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," pp. 183-184.

It was believed that the \$1,550,000 provided by President Roosevelt's executive order would be sufficient to conclude all land purchases for the park. But the cost of condemnation proceedings against the Ravensford Lumber Company and the necessity of fulfilling options on other lands soon swallowed up the new funds.⁷³ Congressman Weaver again came to the aid of the park. Weaver devised a scheme which he thought would assure the completion of the park and implemented the plan through a bill he introduced in Congress. The bill, introduced on January 26, 1934, decreased the number of acres required to officially establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. According to Weaver's bill, the park would be established when a minimum of 400,000 acres had been acquired and transferred to the federal government. This proposal abolished the stipulation of 428,000 acres set for full development of the park.⁷⁴ The long delayed opening of the national park would surely be hastened if the size of the park area were reduced. The bill cleared Congress and was signed by President Roosevelt on June 15, 1934.⁷⁵

Despite the passage of Weaver's minimum acreage bill, efforts to secure an early realization of the Smokies park were diminished when David Chapman relayed some alarming news to Congressman Weaver.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 184.

⁷⁴ Asheville Citizen, January 27, 1934, p. 1.

⁷⁵ David C. Chapman to A. B. Cammerer, December 14, 1935, Zebulon Weaver Papers, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, hereinafter cited as Weaver Papers.

Chapman had been notified by Arno B. Cammerer, former associate director and now director of the National Park Service, that it would take 425,846.42 acres to complete the park. This figure came as a complete shock to park proponents since Weaver's bill had called for only 400,000 acres. Chapman was at a loss as to where Cammerer derived his larger figure and urged Weaver to obtain a ruling from the attorney general of the United States for 400,000 acres to complete the park.⁷⁶ Weaver was just as stunned as Chapman. His bill of 1934 clearly established 400,000 acres as the area needed to qualify the Great Smokies for full fledged national park status; in fact, it had been formulated to speed the official opening of the park.⁷⁷

Director Cammerer's reason for adhering to the larger acreage requirement was an elementary one. He was afraid to declare the Smokies park complete when only 400,000 acres had been procured because it would be difficult to get the money necessary to round out the park to its full boundary. By now it was apparent that park officials and even President Roosevelt had drastically underestimated the money needed to complete land purchases.⁷⁸

⁷⁶David C. Chapman to Zebulon Weaver, December 14, 1935, Weaver Papers.

⁷⁷Zebulon Weaver to David C. Chapman, December 20, 1935, Weaver Papers.

⁷⁸David C. Chapman to Zebulon Weaver, January 3, 1936, Weaver Papers.

Tennessee was behind in its acquisition of land and there was spreading discord among park supporters in Tennessee that threatened to divide the park movement. Tennessee officials believed that Cammerer had willfully discriminated against their state in the allotment of funds to acquire land. Senator Kenneth McKellar was the most vocal of Cammerer's Tennessee detractors and he verbally depicted Cammerer as the personification of everything that was spurious.⁷⁹

The North Carolina Park Commission had received most of the \$1,550,000 provided by President Roosevelt's executive order. The money was used to buy all the remaining land on the North Carolina side of the park with the exception of one small tract of 60 acres. On April 30, 1934, North Carolina obtained its last major tract when the 32,709.57 acres owned by the Ravensford Lumber Company was secured by the park commission.⁸⁰

When Representative Weaver learned that Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes was in agreement with Cammerer's higher acreage requirement for the park, internal disharmony among park advocates had to be subordinated to the task of confronting the opposition. More funds had to be obtained before the remaining 26,014.15 acres of park land could be purchased in Tennessee. Park officials now

⁷⁹ David C. Chapman to Zebulon Weaver, January 24, 1936, Weaver Papers.

⁸⁰ Asheville Citizen, May 1, 1934, p. 1.

estimated that \$743,265.29 would be needed to complete the Great Smokies park.⁸¹

Congressman Weaver wasted no time in seeking once again a solution to the park movement's financial problems. Weaver first obtained assurances from President Roosevelt that he would back efforts to secure the funds necessary to complete the park. The president expressed emphatically his desire to see the park officially opened at the earliest possible date.⁸² Weaver, acting on President Roosevelt's pledge of approval, began to round up House support for an appropriation bill that had already passed the Senate. The Senate bill was sponsored by Senator Patrick McCarran of Nevada. It provided funds to buy additional lands for the Tahoe National Forest and was amended to appropriate money to complete the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.⁸³ The McCarran bill carried an appropriation of \$743,265.29 for the park, but Weaver's strategy to get the bill through the House was upset when Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee introduced another authorization bill in the Senate. Senator McKellar's bill exceeded the appropriation of McCarran's bill by \$40,000. The extra \$40,000 was for park administration expenses.⁸⁴ Weaver was surprised when he learned that

⁸¹Ibid., April 3, 1936, p. 1, p. 8.

⁸²Ibid., August 17, 1937, p. 1.

⁸³Ibid., August 11, 1937, p. 1.

⁸⁴Ibid., January 12, 1938, p. 12.

Senator Robert Reynolds of North Carolina had co-sponsored the McKellar bill. At the time the new bill was introduced, Weaver could not understand the reasoning behind Reynolds' and McKellar's action.⁸⁵ When Reynolds and McKellar announced that they had President Roosevelt's support for their bill, Weaver was even more piqued. He and Congressman Sam McReynolds of Tennessee met with Roosevelt on January 11, 1938. They returned from the White House with assurance of support for the original authorization bill. The representatives were convinced that the Senate bill sponsored by Reynolds and McKellar would complicate House approval of the funds necessary to complete the park.⁸⁶

Senators Reynolds and McKellar defended their maneuver by pointing out that the new bill did not contain a provision for the Tahoe National Forest. President Roosevelt had not said that he would favor any expenditures to acquire additional land for the Tahoe National Forest. Weaver and McReynolds contended that the appropriation for Tahoe was necessary to gain Western support for McCarran's bill.⁸⁷

The McCarran bill remained on the House calendar and was brought before the Committee of the Whole on February 2, 1938.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Zebulon Weaver to Charles Webb, January 8, 1938, Weaver Papers.

⁸⁶Asheville Citizen, January 12, 1938, p. 12.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸U. S., Congress, House, 75th Cong., 3d sess., 1938, Congressional Record, LXXXIII, 1412.

If the bill passed the House, it would assure the completion of the park and at the same time obviate the Senate bill of Reynolds and McKellar. Even with President Roosevelt's backing of an appropriation for the park, there was some concern that the measure might fail in the House. The nation had recently suffered a severe recession which had set back economic recovery from the depression, and the mood of many congressmen was reflected in reduced expenditures.⁸⁹

When McCarran's bill was read on February 2, 1938, Republican Congressman Robert F. Rich of Pennsylvania lashed out at it. Rich observed a "nigger in the woodpile."⁹⁰ He argued that the states of North Carolina and Tennessee had shirked their responsibility. Rich pointed out that the Park Act of May 22, 1926, had required the states to give the land for the Smokies park to the federal government. It was the duty of North Carolina and Tennessee to furnish the land for free and if they had any moral integrity, the states would do so.⁹¹

Weaver replied to Rich's vulgar outburst directed toward his state and Tennessee. He made it clear that the park was in no way a local concern. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park was exactly what its name declared. The park was a national one and belonged to

⁸⁹ Charles E. Ray to Zebulon Weaver, December 9, 1937, Weaver Papers.

⁹⁰ U. S., Congress, House, 75th Cong., 3d sess., 1938, Congressional Record, LXXXIII, 1414.

⁹¹ Ibid.

all the people of the United States. It would be administered for the people as a whole by the National Park Service.⁹² Weaver pleaded magnanimously for the park:

It is the great roof of eastern America. There are more than 50 peaks in this great area that are higher than Mount Washington. It is a wilderness area, and it still contains much of the original forest. The great masters of the forest still grow there, and on the higher reaches of these fine mountains we find the last of the great fir forests of eastern America. It is being preserved for the American people. From the standpoint of value, the park will be worth immensely more for its timber and other assets than the money which has gone into it, and we earnestly ask you to vote for this bill. I may say that the president approves of this, because he wishes to round out this park so that it may be fully established for all the people of America.⁹³

Weaver's speech was followed by a vigorous round of applause, and the bill breezed through the House by a vote of 103 to 10.⁹⁴

President Roosevelt signed the McCarran bill on February 14, 1938. He waited until the last possible day to approve it and signed only after being assured that no appropriation would be requested to execute the provision of the bill authorizing acquisition of additional property for the Tahoe National Forest in Nevada.⁹⁵

By April, 1937, the North Carolina Park Commission had secured all of the North Carolina side of the park.⁹⁶ The

⁹²Ibid., p. 1415.

⁹³Ibid., pp. 1415-1416.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 1422.

⁹⁵Asheville Citizen, February 15, 1938, p. 1.

⁹⁶Gatewood, "North Carolina's Role in the Establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," p. 184.

\$743,265.29 provided by the act of February 14, 1938, proved adequate to complete the purchase of park land in Tennessee. With the acquisition of the remaining Tennessee acreage, the Smokies park was brought up to the size required for formal dedication. After several delays caused by the outbreak of war in Europe, President Roosevelt selected Labor Day of 1940 as the day for dedication of the 463,000 acre park.⁹⁷ On September 2, 1940, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stood at the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial located on Newfound Gap and spoke to a crowd estimated at 10,000 people. In stirring words President Roosevelt officially dedicated the Great Smoky Mountains National Park ". . . to the free people of America. . . ." ⁹⁸ Finally, after almost a half century of active campaigning, the people of western North Carolina witnessed the culmination of their efforts. A national park in the mountains of North Carolina was now a reality.

⁹⁷ Asheville Citizen, August 21, 1940, p. 1.

⁹⁸ Ibid., September 3, 1940, p. 12.

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